

# **MALAWI**

## **PROGRESS ON THE BEIJING +10 REPORT**

**Ministry of Gender and Community Services**

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## ***Preface***

This report has been compiled as a requirement of both the United Nations and the Malawi Government to fulfill the commitment made by adopting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000). The report also assesses progress made in implementing. The Malawi National Platform for Action (1997), the National Gender Policy (2000), the National Strategy on Combating Gender Based Violence (2002), and related policies and strategic frameworks in Population and Development, Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, Education, Environment, Women Social and Economic Empowerment, Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security.

Major progress to date is limited to formulation of policies, programmes and strategies at national level. Institutional development and strengthening at both national and district levels is still in process. As a result, implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is still not institutionalized in most systems and processes of national development further, a number of challenges and constraints highlighted in this report are, in part, due to limitations in institutional development and implementation of the national policies and programmes which have integrated the Beijing Platform for Action and related regional and international instruments.

The major lessons learned in this progress report is that Malawi has been slow in making desired strides in attaining the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Malawi National Platform for Action, and the generic policies and programmes developed out of a genuine desire to improve on women's and girl child's empowerment status and attainment of gender equality.

A number of proposed actions for each focus area have been outlined. These reflects the desired actions that Malawi wishes to implement in the next five to ten years in order to make tangible strides towards gender equality, advancement and empowerment of women and girls who constitute 51% of the Malawi population. Strengthening partnership, networking and collaboration among the stakeholders will go along way in contributing to successful implementation of these forward – looking strategies and actions. Support of the development partners, including the United Nations Agencies, should therefore be continued and strengthened within the specific areas identified and defined in this report.

The Compilation of this report was done through nation wide consultations, extensive review of sectoral progress reports, evaluation and research study reports, policies and programmes, and through series of consultative workshops. The National Gender Machinery provided the guidance and leadership in preparing this report using the questionnaire circulated by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women to all governments/member states the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

The Government of Malawi wishes to extend its acknowledgement to the National Gender machinery, all key stakeholders and individuals who contributed in various ways and capacities to the production of this report. It is the Government of Malawi expectation that the report will be useful to all users at all levels, in particular, renewing each one's commitment to the goals and objectives of achieving gender equity and equality at national, regional and International levels.

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Minister for Gender Child Welfare and Community Services

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## List of acronyms

ADC	:	Area Development Committee
ADMARC	:	Agriculture Development and Marketing Corporation
AEC	:	Area Executive Committee
ALDSA	:	Agriculture and Livestock Development Strategy and Action Plan
ARVs	:	Anti-Retroviral
BLM	:	Banja La Mstogolo
CBNRM	:	Community Based Natural Resources Management
CDSS	:	Community Day Secondary Schools
CEDAW	:	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women
CHAM	:	Christian Health Association of Malawi
COMESA	:	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CONGOMA	:	Council for Non Governmental Organizations in Malawi
CPAR	:	Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief
CSC	:	Christian Service Committee
CSR	:	Centre for Social Research
CURE	:	Coordinating Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment
DAGG	:	Development Assistance Group on Gender
DEC	:	District Executive Committee
DFID	:	Department for International Development
EBCM	:	Evangelical Baptist Church of Malawi
ECD	:	Early Childhood Development
EDETA	:	Enterprise Development and Training Agency
ELDP	:	Evangelical Lutheran Development Programme
EPI	:	Expanded Programme of Immunization
FPE	:	Free Primary Education Policy
FUDD	:	Food Italicization and Dietary Diversification
GABLE	:	Girls Attainment of Basic Literacy and Education
GAC	:	Gender Advisory Committee
GBV	:	Gender Based Violence
GDP	:	Gross Domestic product
GEF	:	Global Environmental Fund
GPIC	:	Gender Policy Implementation Committee
GTZ	:	German Agency for Technical Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit)
HIV/AIDS	:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICPD	:	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	:	Information Communication Technology
IFAD	:	International Food and Agriculture Development
IGA	:	Income Generating Activity
HIS	:	Intergrated Household Survey
IUD	:	Intrauterine Device
JAMA	:	Journalists Association of Malawi
MAMW	:	Malawi Media Women's Association

MASSAJ :	Malawi Safety, Security and Access to Justice
MBC :	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MCDE :	Malawi Centres of Distance Education
MCT :	Mother to Child Transmission
MDHS :	Malawi Demographic and Health Survey
MEFA :	Malawi Education for All programme
MEJIN :	Malawi Economic Justice Network
MGTT :	Malawi Gender Trainers Team
MHRC :	Malawi Human Rights Commission
MHRRC :	Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre
MITEP :	Malawi Integrated Teacher Education Programme
MK :	Malawi Kwacha
MKAPH :	Malawi Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in health
MLC :	Malawi Law Commission
MNPFA :	Malawi National Platform for Action
MOEST :	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MoGCS :	Ministry of Gender and Community Services
MP :	Member of Parliament
MPRSP :	Malawi Poverty Reduction strategy Paper
MRFC :	Malawi Rural Finance Company
MSSSP :	Malawi School Support Systems Project
NAC :	National AIDS Commission
NABW :	National Association for Business Women
NAMISA :	National Association for Medical Institute of Southern Africa
NAPA :	National Adaptation Programme for Action
NCGDT :	National Commission on Gender and Development Trust
NCWID :	National Commission on Women in Development
NFPA :	National Family Planning Association
NGO :	Non-Governmental Organization
NGO – GCN :	Gender Coordination Network
NGP :	National Gender Policy
NICE :	National Initiative for Civic Education
NSO :	National Statistical Office
OVOP :	One Village One Product
PAP :	Poverty Alleviation Programme
PEA :	Primary Education Advisors
PIF :	Policy and Investment Framework
PS :	Principal Secretary
RHU :	Reproductive Health Unit
SADC :	Southern Africa Development Cooperation
SEDOM :	Small Enterprise Development Organization of Malawi
SMC-EQ :	Social Mobilization Campaign for Education Quality
STIs :	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TBA :	Traditional Birth Attendant
TEVETA :	Technical, Entrepreneurial, Vocational Education and Training Authority
UNCDF :	United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNCED :	United Nations Convention on Environment and Development
UNDP :	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA :	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNIFEM :	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNIMAL :	University of Malawi
USA :	United States of America
USAID :	United States Agency for International; Development
US\$ :	United States Dollar
VCT :	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
VCD :	Village Development Committee
WILSA :	Women and the Law in Southern Africa
WVI :	World Vision International

## **PART ONE: OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

### **Introduction**

Malawi is a land locked country with close to 90% of its population staying in rural areas, of which 70% are women. After the Beijing Conference, Malawi identified four critical areas of concern from the platform for action namely: *poverty alleviation and empowerment, the girl child, violence against women and peace*. By 1997, Malawi's own platform for action was produced through a consultative process with women, men, girls and boys, influential and opinion leaders. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Malawi Dr Bakili Muluzi launched the Malawi National Platform for Action on 8th March 1997. The four priority areas encompassed all the 12 critical areas of the Beijing platform for action.

#### **(a) National Gender Policy**

The National Gender Policy was developed through a consultative process with women, men, girls, boys, widows and widowers, orphans, members of parliament, chiefs, influential and opinion leaders in the then 177 constituencies. The consultations resulted in the identification of 13 gender issues that were grouped into 6 thematic areas namely: *Education and training; Reproductive Health; Food and Nutrition Security; Environmental and Natural Resource Management; Governance and Human Rights; and Poverty Alleviation and Economic Empowerment*. The policy was adopted by the Cabinet and launched on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2000 by the First Lady Madam Patricia Shanil Muluzi. The policy proposed an implementation structure that puts the Cabinet at the apex; the Ministry of Gender and Community Services as the national gender machinery is the secretariat to the structure and it extends to the grassroots with various networks. The Secretary to the President and Cabinet is the first to follow on all the Principal Secretaries committee that monitors mainstreaming of gender in public sectors. Further, gender focal points have been formed in all stakeholder organisations, trained them in gender analysis and mainstreaming. Additionally, gender audit tools, planning and budgeting guidelines and mainstreaming guidelines have been produced. The national gender machinery coordinates and collaborates with the various stakeholders in monitoring the implementation of the policy. This is done through reports, meetings, field visits and consultative meetings, symposiums and workshops.

#### **(b) National Action Plan**

The national gender machinery is mandated to spearhead the development, implementation and coordination of the national gender policy and provide backstopping services on gender to all the stakeholders. In connection with this, it has developed the National Gender Programme (NGP) to facilitate the implementation of the National Gender Policy. On continuous basis, various aspects of the national gender policy and programme are addressed using information education and communication techniques and its progress monitored. The major constraints are inadequate finances, human and material resources that would match with the expectations and commitments on gender and development issues.

#### **(c) The Millennium Declaration and Goals**

The implementations of the national platform for action, national gender policy and programme; and the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) have taken into consideration all the

provisions in the millennium development goals framework. As a result, gender perspectives and concerns of women are considered in the all sectoral goals in response to MDG goals

(d) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

Aspects of CEDAW are being incorporated in national legislations and efforts to harmonise international, national and traditional laws in Malawi are underway, especially, in the areas of property rights and family law.

(e) Achievements in Legislative and policy making achievements

Malawi has formed several constitutional bodies such as the Law Commission that is mandated to review and enact laws. The commission has a special Law Commission on Gender that is reviewing and developing gender related laws. High on the special law commission agenda is the development of the Gender Equality Law that will assist in enforcing the various legal provisions. Malawi Human Rights Commission is mandated to provide gender legal education and public awareness on human, women and children's rights including public hearing on these issues. The Ombudsman receives various employment complaints most of which, are from women. The Electoral Commission is responsible for election issues including the encouragement of women to stand for political and decision making positions. Since poverty is wide spread at 65% in Malawi and 75% among women, poverty alleviation and the crosscutting nature of gender issues are the current governments development goal and policy framework. Hence the arching implementation document of Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper has recognised gender as a crosscutting issue and it has been given a special budget in the 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar. Work is in progress to engender most policies of the stakeholders even though internalisation of gender as a development and poverty reduction tool is still not full attained. The Constitution of Malawi is very progressive and it has enshrined a bill of rights in Chapter 4 and women's rights are fully recognised.

(f) Engendering Budgets

A gender planning and budgeting initiative was started in 2001 and 7 facilitators were trained. This was followed by the orientation and training of personnel from 8 Ministries in Gender planning and budgeting and an analysis of their own 2001/2002 budgets. Gender planning and budgeting guidelines and checklist were produced and are awaiting printing and distribution. The 8 Ministries were monitored and discussions are on going to engender the national budgeting guidelines. Follow – up activities are underway to equip seniors directors in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and Development with social inclusion techniques which includes gender budgeting.

(g) Government policy discussions and parliamentary debates

All the public sectoral policies and programmes are going to be subjected to gender mainstreaming through Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The while Land Policy and Act and the Decentralisation Policy and Act are undergoing review and gender issues are being addressed. The Policies in the Military have been were reviewed to accommodate the employment of female soldiers who were not accepted before 2000. The gender agenda is high on the Malawi's political and decision making debates at all levels. Discussions on engendering parliament have been made at various levels and there is an active women's parliamentary



caucus which is spearheading gender law reviews in parliament. Other reform areas include the public sector reform program which has mainstreamed gender and decentralisation policy which is incorporating gender and HIV/AIDS as key areas in the development of district and local areas.

(h) Armed conflict

Malawi has been involved in peace negotiations in Burundi, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zimbabwe. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Corporation, who is a woman among others, was included in the peace missions.

(i) Globalisation

Since Malawi lives in a global village, globalisation has affected Malawian women negatively due to absence of Information Communication Technology. The majority of women do not have access to communication technology and do not even know how to use it. This limits their access to markets. The change in trading patterns where vending has become common, has forced some of the small scale business women out of business more especially, in the food sector. For the capable women, it has exposed them to external markets. While liberalisation has made women worse off, made redundant and lost their jobs, others thus gained. There is therefore need to put in place strategies that will increase women's participation in trade in view of the global village.

(J) Sector Areas

Sectors that have engendered their policies include Ministries of Defence; Education, Science and Technology; Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security; Health; Water Development; Forestry, Fisheries and Environment; and Wild life among others. Their implementation is at different levels while for others it remains a big challenge.

(k) Partnership with NGOs

Malawi has provided a conducive environment for the proliferation of several NGOs: there is a Coordinating institution for NGOs (CONGOMA) is in place and an NGO Act which has led to the formation of the NGO Board. The NGOs working on gender formed the NGO Gender Coordination Network that has several sub networks on the 6 thematic areas of the national gender policy and programme. At community level, community action groups to combat gender based violence have been formed and Police posts have established victim support units. Men and women are also included in discussions on gender related issues such as HIV/AIDs, Youth empowerment and girls' education.

(l) Engagement of men and boys in promotion of gender equality

Malawi targeted men at all levels with awareness campaigns on gender as a development issue, and created a critical mass for the purpose. A men for gender equality network was formed with over 200 members and a national Conference was held in November 2003 during the 16 days of activism on gender based violence that attracted 350 participants from Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia and Malawi.

## **PART TWO: PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION AND THE FURTHER INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS IDENTIFIED IN THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **A. *WOMEN AND POVERTY***

#### **Introduction**

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2003). Poverty in Malawi is widespread, deep and severe; and it is rampant amongst Malawian women at 75% compared to 25% for men by 2003 compared to 70% and 30% respectively in 1995; (Ministry of Economic Planning 2003).

#### *(a) Achievements*

The Government launched a Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) in August 1994 and made Poverty reduction its operative development goal and objective. The mission statement of PAP is to transform the economic structures so that they meaningfully contribute towards improving the living standard of the people. In order to achieve the objectives, the government has committed itself to the implementation of public policies, projects and programmes with a focus on poverty reduction. In 2002 a Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) was finalised with a focus on pro-poor economic growth framework.

In view of this situation, efforts have been made to establish a gender sensitive formal and informal legal environment, eradicate gender-based violence and enhance women's participation in leadership and decision making processes. One of these efforts is the development of the Malawi National Platform for Action (MNPFA) launched in November 1997 as a follow up to the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women, in order, to effectively address, the issues that impact negatively on women and contribute to poverty, the MNPFA had four priority areas of which poverty alleviation and empowerment is the first.

To date, the Government recognises and acknowledges that 70% of all agriculture work is done by women compared to 30% by men and 71% of all casual labourers in the estate sector are women compared to 29% men. Further, they produce 80% of food for home consumption compared to 20% by men. Yet their access to factors of production such as land, extension service, inputs like fertiliser and seeds still remain limited. Efforts have been made to address this gap through the review of the existing agricultural policies and programmes. In 1995 the Agricultural and Livestock Development Strategy and Action Plan (ALDSAP) was formulated with specific targets and gender out puts as follows:

- i) To increase women's access to agriculture, irrigation development and extension services. This called for the:
  - Review of the curriculum for various agricultural training institutions to make them gender sensitive.
  - Recruitment of more female extension workers in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation Management.

- Orienting the existing extension workers in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation on gender issues so that they increase their coverage of women farmers.
  - Encourage women farmers to attend literacy classes.
- ii) To increase agricultural seasonal credit provision to women farmers that required:
- Sensitising women farmers and potential farmers on the available credit facilities under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and other institutions.
  - Training women farmers in credit management.
  - Encouraging formation of exclusive women farmers clubs, which should take on commercial agriculture.
  - Putting up deliberate actions to avail credit to women.
2. Increase women's access to economic factors. This called for:
- Training of women in business management
  - Developing entrepreneurial skills and attitudes in the women
  - Linking more women to lending institutions
  - Increasing banking services in rural areas
  - Establishing collateral funding for women entrepreneurs
  - Integrating business training in credit programmes for small and micro business

The government's policy is to promote the strengthening of credit mechanisms to enable women's access to credit for both on farm and off farm activities. Available studies have revealed that women's access to credit has improved. The numbers of micro financing institutions for women have increased from 3 in 1990 to 10 in 1999. Women constituted 15% of those having access to credit in 1995, the proportion had increased to 40% by 1999 and it is now 55%. This has resulted in an increase in the number of women engaged in off-farm business activities from 3 000 to 45 000 in 1995 and 2003, respectively. The number of women trained in business management also increased from 10 000 to 80 000 during the same period. In the economic activities programme run by the Ministry of Gender and Community Services alone, the number of women reached with business management training increased from 10,000 in 1995 to 80,085 in 2003 while access to credit has increased to 44,773 in 2003.

Considering that women account for 75% of the poor, the government has put in place an affirmative strategy to increase women's access to credit through different institutions. As a result, between 1995 and 2003 Malawi has trained over 500,000 women and older girls and 150,000 men and older boys in business, credit and technology management. More than 85,242 women and 50,024 men compared to 34,049 and 13,486 women and men respectively in 1995 have been linked to lending institutions and have accessed loans as shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 **Cumulative Loan Disbursement by Sex by various institutions**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Women</b>		<b>Amount (MK)</b>	<b>Men</b>		<b>Amount (MK)</b>
PRIDE Malawi 2000 – 2003	15,737	46%	273,575,733	18,566	54%	313,840,352
SEDOM 1995 – 2003	501	35%	42,520,342	1,421	65%	159,957,478
<b>Foundation</b>						
FINCA 1995 – 2003	18,555	99.9 %	1,926,794,210 .36	18	0.01 %	2,414,000
First Merchant Bank (1996–03)	22	24%	8,249,249	68	76%	65,341,721
National Bank of Malawi 95/03	3,165	14.5 %	140,185,680	21,827	85.5 %	942,580,454
STANBIC BANK 1995-2003	39001	23%	159,724,300	132,890	77%	314,710,632
Malawi Savings Bank 1995-03	10,000	80%	15,000,000	2000	20%	6,000,000
NABW 1995 – 2003	13,232	99.9 %	5,575,223.39	15	0.01 %	463,588.96
MOGCS 1995-2003	43,600	70%	49,000,000	10,900	30%	21,000,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>61,212</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>2,411,900,437</b>	<b>43,915</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>1,490,597,593</b>

**Source:** Compiled from the information provided by the various institutions 2003

Table 1 above shows that there are more women targeted with credit between 1995 and 2003. The deliberate effort has helped to make these institutions to target women by making more funds available for the purpose.

Table 2: *Loan Disbursement by Sex of Some Financial Institutions*

<i>Year Credit issued</i>	<i>1995</i>				<i>2003</i>			
<i>Target Clients</i>	<i>Females</i>		<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>		<i>Males</i>	
<i>Name of Institutions</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
<b><i>Pride Malawi</i></b>	-	-	-	-	<b><i>15,737</i></b>	<b><i>46</i></b>	<b><i>18566</i></b>	<b><i>54</i></b>
<b><i>SEDOM</i></b>	<b><i>39</i></b>	<b><i>35</i></b>	<b><i>71</i></b>	<b><i>65</i></b>	<b><i>310</i></b>	<b><i>35</i></b>	<b><i>575</i></b>	<b><i>65</i></b>
<b><i>NATIONAL BANK</i></b>	<b><i>301</i></b>	<b><i>15</i></b>	<b><i>1761</i></b>	<b><i>85</i></b>	<b><i>483</i></b>	<b><i>14</i></b>	<b><i>3219</i></b>	<b><i>86</i></b>
<b><i>STANBIC BANK</i></b>	<b><i>1910</i></b>	<b><i>14</i></b>	<b><i>11654</i></b>	<b><i>86</i></b>	<b><i>6903</i></b>	<b><i>28</i></b>	<b><i>17563</i></b>	<b><i>72</i></b>
<b><i>MALAWI SAVINGS BANK</i></b>	<b><i>200</i></b>	<b><i>10</i></b>	<b><i>2500</i></b>	<b><i>90</i></b>	<b><i>10,000</i></b>	<b><i>80</i></b>	<b><i>2000</i></b>	<b><i>20</i></b>
<b><i>NABW</i></b>	<b><i>10,000</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>	-	-	<b><i>13232</i></b>	<b><i>99.9</i></b>	<b><i>15</i></b>	<b><i>0.01</i></b>
<b><i>FIRST MECHANT BANK</i></b>	-	-	-	-	<b><i>22</i></b>	<b><i>24</i></b>	<b><i>68</i></b>	<b><i>76</i></b>
<b><i>FINCA</i></b>	-	-	-	-	18,555	99.9	18	0.01
<b><i>INDIVIDUALS LINKED BY MOGCS</i></b>	<b><i>10,000</i></b>	<b><i>100</i></b>	-	-	30,000	70	10,000	30
<b><i>Totals</i></b>	<b><i>44,049</i></b>	<b><i>30</i></b>	<b><i>15,986</i></b>	<b><i>70</i></b>	95,242	55	52,024	45

**Source:** Compiled from the information provided by the various institutions 2003

Table 2 above shows the trend that has taken place between 1995 and 2003 in credit provision to women and men. The good practice that should be learned is that the Government of Malawi deposited the collateral with commercial banks to enable women to access credit and removed the male guarantor required for loan access.

Loan repayment rate ranges between 75-99%. In order to increase credit access to rural women and men, the government, through the Ministry of Gender and Community Services, established the loan revolving fund in 2001 by entering into an agreement with two commercial banks: Stanbic and Malawi Savings Banks. Under this agreement, the government has been able to link over 43,600 women and 10,900 men to these two banks countrywide. Other lending institutions that have played a very vital role include NABW that has benefited 13,232 women and 15 men, FINCA 18,555 women and 22 men, SEDOM 501 women and 1421 men, Malawi Rural Finance Company 50 women and 500 men, Pride Malawi 15,737 women and 18,566 men among others.

Malawi has also participated in regional and international activities like the Women in Business (WIB) SADC Fairs held in Namibia in 2000 and 2002 in Malawi. These activities have exposed Malawian women entrepreneurs to international markets, business ventures and skills. Malawian women won first position and a trophy at each of the two WIB-SADC fairs held in 2000 in Namibia and 2002 in Malawi. The outcome of the exposure has been the exporting of bamboo products, lime, oil and weaving products to South Africa and Mozambique among others made by 20% of those that attended the fairs.

To strengthen work on small and medium enterprises, a policy on Small and Medium enterprises was developed and adopted in 2002 and is being implemented in encouraging small-scale entrepreneurship skills development which is benefiting women as well.

The land policy and an Act are under review to ensure that among other things land ownership does not discriminate against women or men.

In order to ensure value adding and creating variety to the products that women carry to the market, technologies like bamboo products, bee keeping, fish farming, bakery, weaving, pig and dairy farming have been introduced to women in groups or as individuals. As a result, women have adopted techniques to reduce workload and increase productivity.

Recently, the government launched the *one village one product (OVOP)* programme, which encourages business undertakings of one marketable product in a particular area or village, quality control, markets linkage and adding value to the product. OVOP was launched on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2003 and to date it has issued loans to 19 groups of 10 – 4,500 people each reaching 4500 beneficiaries of which 50% are women.

#### **(b) Obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges**

Collateral requirements by lending institutions, low education levels, lack of knowledge and information by women on lending institutions, and long distances to the institutions are some of the obstacles against women's access to credit facilities. Poor loan repayment has made some lending institutions to close their doors to poor groups/population. Most women do not have assets that can be accepted as collateral because property is mostly owned by men. The Government

and other stakeholders have gone round the problem by using the group system which acts as guarantor for its members. To date for example, the number of extension groups organised for purposes of business in the Ministry of Agriculture has risen from 15,000 in 1999 to 45,000 in 2003 of which 15% are women groups.

## **B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN AND THE GIRL CHILD**

### **Introduction**

Malawi adopted free primary Education (FPE) Policy in 1994. The basis of the FPE dates back to 1990 when Malawi adopted the World Declaration on Education for All following the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand) in March 1990. The Declaration stated that basic education for all is a right and must be given the highest priority. Additionally, the Malawi Constitution Chapter III sub section (f) and chapter IV section 25 provide for : (i) *“elimination of illiteracy in Malawi”*, and (ii) *“make primary education compulsory and free to all citizens of Malawi”* and that “all persons are entitled to education”

The Regional and international instruments further reaffirm that non-discriminatory education and training for women, men, girls and boys as the basis for attaining gender equality, poverty reduction, social justice, empowerment of women and the girl child and sustainable development. Such instruments include:

- Pan-African Conference on the Education for Girls Ouagadougou Declaration (Burkina Faso, 1993);
- International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo 1994);
- World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995);
- Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995);
- Malawi Constitution (1995);
- Malawi National Gender Policy (2000);
- Millennium Development Goals, Targets and Indicators (2000); and
- The Twenty- Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000).

### **(a) Achievements**

Malawi has made some progress in the implementation of the MNPFA and the outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000) in the area of education and Training for Women and the Girl Child.

#### **i. Primary Education:**

Following the adoption of the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy in May 1994, the Government of Malawi abolished school fees, uniform requirements and various forms of school funds in order to increase access to basic education by all school going age girls and boys. Further, the government reviewed the pregnancy policy that made the girl child who drops out of school after being pregnant to be allowed to return back to school after delivery at all levels of the education system.

To consolidate the FPE policy, the government merged assisted and unassisted schools into one category; assumed the financing of all primary schools and re-organised the Ministry of

Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) to effectively champion the implementation of the FPE initiative. The MOEST was re-organised into five divisions namely:

- Planning,
- Methods,
- Education Management Services,
- Finance and Human Resources Management, and
- Administration.

A number of programmes were developed and are being implemented to achieve the goals of FPE that include:

- Improved accessibility, equality and equity;
- Quality and efficient education system, and
- Finance sustainability

Some of the programmes implemented between 1995 – 2004 include the following:

- Malawi Integrated Teacher Education Programme (MITEP). This programme is on going since 1995 and aims at training the untrained teachers and upgrading those in service to Diploma level.
- Malawi School Support Systems Project (MSSSP) - on-going since 1995 and focuses on development of national training programme, construction of Teachers Development Centres, preparation of training materials for training of School Heads and Primary School Education Advisors (PEAs);
- Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) 1994 – 2000 aimed at increasing girls access to basic education through a social mobilization campaign at all levels;
- The GABLE programme aimed at increasing girls' access to basic education through the provision of textbooks, notebooks, more school blocks and teachers' houses, and other facilities. Additionally, Social Mobilisation Campaign for Education equality (SMC-EQ) also aimed at changing the community attitude towards girls' education and improves education quality). This has been on going since 2000; its aim is to encourage communities to participate and take control in education, and improve its quality in order to ensure boys and girls get the best out of education at all levels.
- Construction of Infant Community Schools 1997 aimed at enhancing girls' education through bringing schools closer to children. Community mobilisation and gender sensitisation was very critical.
- Promotion of Community Schools 1994 – 1997 that was funded by USAID and it encouraged school committees to be 50% each for females and males and deliberate effort was made to have same proportions for schools headship and encourage girls to enrol, retain and complete the school cycle.
- Malawi Education for All Campaign (MEFA) 1995 which led into the establishment of the Universal Milk –O- Fund; and the introduction of school feeding programme.
- Closing the Gender Gap through reviewing the school curriculum to make it gender responsive and orientation of teachers on the new curriculum.
- Primary Education Project 1995 that aimed at increasing the number of primary schools equipped with water and sanitary facilities.
- Second Education Sector Credit Project 1995;

- Training of para-professional teachers and teacher supervisors whose purpose is to reduce the number of untrained teachers at the same time increasing the number of supervisors.
- Reprinting of text books and teaching-learning materials (1997) for standards 5-8;
- Building and equipping primary schools in urban areas to make them self sufficient.
- Construction of divisional and district education offices 1993 – 2000;

The introduction of free primary education resulted in an increased enrolment from 1.9 million pupils to 3.2 million in the 1994/95 academic year. At enrolment, the ratio of boys and girls is 1:1. Between standards 1 to 4 more boys drop out of school than boys by standard 5, more girls drop out and fewer complete the primary cycle as shown by table 3 below. General achievement has been increase in enrolment. Gross enrolment rates increased by 40% and net enrolment rates by 25% in 1995. prior to FPE policy, enrolment levels in 1995/96 academic year was 3.2. By the year 2000, enrolment levels reached 3,016,972. During the same period, the government recruited additional 22,000 untrained teachers and the share of the recurrent budget to primary education increased from 49% in 1993/94 to 65% in 2000. The share of the budget remained at this level up to 2003/2004 financial year that ends in June. The number of untrained teachers has decreased to 13,000 by 2003.

## **ii. Early Childhood Development and Pre-school education**

An evaluation of the early childhood development service revealed that 95% of the graduates who go to primary school perform better. There has been increased proliferation of day care centres, kindergartens /pre-schools and early development centres. In order to provide guidance in the operation of these schools and maintain standard, an Early Childhood Development Policy and an Orphan and Other Vulnerable Children Policy have been developed, launched and adopted in March 2004. During 2002/03, there were 3,207 early Childhood Development Centres covering 135,436 children aged 3-5years. Further to the policy, the Government has developed the Early Childhood Care Programme, Syllabus which have been disseminated to all schools and centres. There were 5,679 teachers for the programme of which 1,554 were trained. An orphan programme policy and training guide have also been developed and launched. To date, over 100,000 orphans are assisted with school fees and other necessities by various institutions including government.

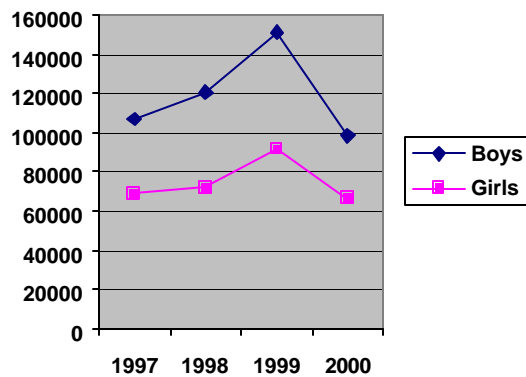
### *Secondary Education*

The secondary school selection ratio policy changed to 50% for both boys and girls. In 1997, 68,689 girls were enrolled compared to 106,798 boys. In 1998, the number of enrolled boys in secondary schools was 120,446 against 71,826 girls. The overall figure for girl's enrolment continued to rise in 1999, when it was 91,524 compared to 151,216 for boys. The major development that contributed to the increased access and enrolment rates included abolition of boarding secondary schools, allowing girls who drop out of pregnancy to return to school after delivery and turning all Malawi Centres of Distance Education (MCDE) into Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) in 2002 and constructing more. Between 1995 and 2000, enrolment levels in conventional secondary schools did not change much. It was fluctuating between 48,360 and 75,959. While in Malawi Centres of Distance Education, enrolment levels increased steadily from 42,308 (1993/94) to 186,415 (2000) and it is currently at 230,000. It should be noted that local communities were the driving force for increased provisions of MCDEs till 2002 when they were transformed into CDSSs and subsequently taken over by the Government.



By 2000, with the phasing out of the USAID funding, through GABLE Project for girls, the number of enrolled girls dropped dramatically to 66,205, lower than in 1997. Refer to fig. 1 below.

**Fig. 1: Drop out figure for boys and girls in secondary schools**



**Source:** Malawi Government 2000

The overall drop out figures in secondary schools is higher for boys than girls, because more boys are dismissed from school due to in-discipline. While for girls, pregnancy is the greatest contributor to their drop out from secondary school. Lack of boarding accommodation for girls at the Community Day Secondary Schools has been to their disadvantage because most of them get into unwanted relationships and share rooms with boy/men friends. Hence increased pregnancy levels. By 2003 the enrolment rate for both boys and girls went even lower to 67,257 boys and 48,720 girls.

#### **iv. Private Sector Education**

Participation of the private sector and faith based organizations in the implementation of FPE has been steadily increasing since 1995. There has been increased proliferation of primary schools and secondary schools throughout the country. In these private schools, parents meet the full cost of educating their children. By the year 2000, private secondary schools' enrolment levels stood at 27,793 and by 2003 it had decreased to 25,160 possibly due to other reasons. It is the current government policy to encourage the private sector to be fully involved in the provision of secondary education in the country.

#### **v. University Education**

There are two Universities in the country. The University of Malawi, which was opened in 1965, has five constituent Colleges namely: Bunda College of Agriculture, Chancellor College, Kamuzu College of Nursing, Malawi College of Medicine and Polytechnic. There has also been a University-supported technical education services offered by a board of Governors and stationed at the University of Malawi's Polytechnic. The Polytechnic offers courses in Engineering, Accountancy, Business Studies, Management, and Technical Education. A College of Medicine specialises in the training of doctors and it is the newest of the University of Malawi's colleges. Nurses are trained at the two campuses of the Kamuzu College of Nursing.

Bunda College specialises in agriculture whilst Chancellor College offers courses in Education, Humanities, Science, Social Sciences and Law. The second university is Mzuzu University, which was opened in 2001, offers course in education. There is currently a move to have a higher education act, which will open a way for the establishment of universities.

The University of Malawi has been implementing a policy of preferential selection for girls and women. The University's policy, backed by Government, allows girls and women to enter the University using lower cut off points than boys and men and reserving at least 30% of the University's bed spaces for the women and girls. Although the reservation of the 30% bed spaces for women has increased, Kamuzu College of Nursing absorbs 75% of female students and 25% males. Enrolment levels for the university education increased from 3,684 (1993/94) to 3,977 (2000). By 2003, the University of Malawi alone had total enrolment levels of 5,315. The increase in this area is wholly due to the introduction of parallel, mature entry and post-graduate programmes without corresponding increase in infrastructure provisions.

#### **vi. Delivery of the education system**

There are few teachers who are adequately trained to deliver the new curricular, which contains human rights notions and principles. Many lack skills in teaching methods that are human rights based and gender sensitive. Teaching in primary and secondary schools is rarely participatory for most girls. In addition, of the 29,687 male teachers in primary schools, nearly half, 14,092 were unqualified in 2000. For female teachers, more were unqualified for example, out of 19,136 female teachers, about 8,971 were qualified.

In 2000, there were 47,840 primary school teachers, of whom 40% are women. In secondary school, women constituted 20.4% of the 5,905 teachers. In vocational institutions, there are 113 teachers comprising 95% males and 5% females. At the University level, 22.5% of the 560 teaching staff were women. These high levels of gender disparities among the teaching staff, implies that girls lack role models.

#### **vii. Educational Attainment**

Girls and women in Malawi have for long achieved less in education than men. In 2000, the pass rates of the Primary School Leaving certificate Examination were 79.3% and 71.1% for boys and girls respectively. At Junior Certificate Level, (after two years of secondary school), the pass rate for girls was 61% compared to 31% for boys, an indication that the initiatives to improve the attainment of girls in education may be bearing results, although both results were too low for such a low level. At the end of secondary education, the pass rate for girls was 14.3% and 23.4% for boys.

At University level, the indications are that significant numbers of women and girls are yet to achieve awards in non-traditional areas such as natural sciences, engineering and law. Refer to table 4 below:

Table 4: Number of Awards by course of Study, Gender and year 2003

Awards	2001			2002			2003		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Bachelor of Arts	46	27	19	30	20	10	44	21	23
BA (Human Resource mgt)	19	12	7	19	12	7	-	-	-
BA (Public Administration)	14	12	2	17	14	3	13	9	4
BA (Theology)	1	-	1	18	17	1	10	10	-
B Acc.	53	45	8	59	53	6	52	42	10
BBA	74	56	18	49	34	15	50	31	19
B Ed.	122	74	48	92	72	20	144	106	38
BSc	44	39	5	47	37	10	50	39	11
BSc (Agriculture)	90	69	21	170	126	44	89	67	22
BSc (Engineering)	46	43	6	77	74	3	63	60	3
BSc (Techno Ed.)	-	-	-	17	17	-	-	-	-
BSc (Environment Science and Techno)	26	24	2	7	6	1	51	40	11
BSc Nursing	16	15	1	11	4	7	33	22	11
B Soc Sc	79	63	16	52	39	13	51	33	18
LL B (Hons)	9	6	3	20	19	1	18	12	6
MA	2	2	-	33	27	6	12	9	3
MBBS	18	13	5	16	7	9	21	18	3
MSc	8	6	2	17	11	6	32	23	9
Other	125	76	49	165	85	80	124	27	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>288</b>

**Source:** University of Malawi 2001, 2002 and 2003

The Government and its partners have taken several measures to encourage girls and women's attainment in education. For example, between 1990 and 1994 a UNDP bursary scheme for high achieving pupils from standard 1 to 8 were in the ratio of 3 girls to 1 boy in each participating school. This bursary which paid for school fees and other learning materials benefited about 26,000 pupils. A scholarship programme, for non-repeating girls in Distance Education Centres and conventional secondary schools was also introduced. This scholarship paid for school and boarding fees for the girls thereby encouraging them to attain high and good grades. To encourage girls and women's attainment in non-traditional subjects at university level, the Government administered a scholar-ship and a career counselling scheme for girls who opted for not-traditional fields such as engineering, management, transport, economics, agricultural economics and sciences from 1987 – 1995. This programme which was funded by USAID benefited 347 students in the University of Malawi.

#### **viii. Content of Education and the Removal of Gender Stereotyping**

The Government has tried to eliminate gender stereotypes through the curriculum. In 1992, the Government established a Gender Appropriate Curriculum initiative to incorporate gender sensitivity in the primary school and teacher training curricular. The primary teacher textbooks have been reviewed to make them gender sensitive. The curricular in both primary and secondary schools incorporated not only gender issues, but also HIV and AIDS and population studies. The curriculum further included topics on family planning, reproductive health, and

include human rights. The training for early childhood development program has incorporated gender issues and CRC to enable children learn about these at an early age.

#### **ix. Teachers Training, Technical and Vocational Education**

Currently, there are six colleges which train primary school teachers. Teacher training increased from 3,624 (1993/94) to 12,129 (2000). The total enrolment rate for women in the six teachers' training colleges is 35% (4248) of 12,129 trainees. The bulk of the increase is due to high demand for teachers in primary and secondary education both by public and private educational institutions/schools. Secondary school teachers are trained at Domasi College of Education, which enrolls 500 students, Chancellor College and Mzuzu University. Generally, however, there has been an increase in enrolment of women and girls in tertiary education over the years. Enrolment in technical and vocational institutions increased from 1,007 (1995/96) to 1,504 (2000). The increase is attributed to re-organisation of the institutions and introduction of the Technical, Entrepreneurial, Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA) under the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training.

#### **x. Adult Literacy education**

There is a marked variation in literacy rates in Malawi. In 1998, rural female and male literacy rates were 47% and 61% respectively where as in urban areas; it was 75% female and 83% males. Before 1994, the Government had an extensive adult literacy programme, where more women than men enrolled.

Currently, there is a high demand for adult education in the communities. Adult literacy programmes at the grassroots had been intensified around 1999/2000 by the Ministry of Gender and Community Services and its stakeholders as one way of reducing poverty in Malawi. In response to this, new materials were developed and distributed; the number of instructors increased from 1500 to 4500 to meet the demand; the instructors honoraria was also increased from K200.00 (US\$2) per month to K500.00 (US\$5) and New classes were opened. Currently an adult literacy policy is being developed. More women enrol in the adult literacy classes in Malawi than men. For example each district has 161 centres on average covering 3214 learners out of which, 2571 are women. The Government is currently exploring possible strategies to address this problem by providing separate classes for men and women.

#### **xi. Special Education**

Special education is being offered to street children combined with skills training and meals provision in major cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu. Faith based organisations have introduced schools for the blind and the deaf that are currently catering for 6,000 students (4% of the population that are physically challenged).

#### **(c) Progress towards the closing of the gender gap**

At primary education level the gender gap has closed in the lower standards of primary education, in particular standards 1-4 and the overall picture between 1997 and 2000 was as per table 5 below:

**Table 5: Enrolment by Gender at primary education level**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Enrolment by Gender</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
1997	2,905,950	52%	48%
1998	2,805,785	51%	49%
1999	2,896,280	52%	48%
2000	3,016,927	52%	48%
2003	3,045,108	50%	50%

**Source:** Malawi Government, 2000 and 2003

There is still need to work hard to attain gender equality in terms of access to, retention and completion of primary education by both girls and boys. In the secondary education, on the other hand, more boys than girls access and complete the secondary education in Malawi as shown in table 6 below. While enrolment levels are improving every year, there is need to address gender disparity at this level. The country is still far behind to close the gender gap because more girls drop out of school after reaching puberty.

**Table 6: Enrolment by gender at secondary education level**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Enrolment by Gender</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
1997	175,487	61%	39%
1998	192,272	63%	37%
1999	242,740	62%	38%
2000	274,949	60%	40%
2003	115,977	58%	42%

**Source:** Malawi Government 2000 and 2003

At the teacher training colleges, there are more male students than female students enrolled to teach at the primary education level. In the year 2000, there were more male teachers enrolled in teacher colleges than female teachers refer to table 7 below: Closing the gender gap should equally be emphasized at primary teacher training college. This can be achieved through closing the gap at the primary and secondary education levels.

**Table 7: Total teacher enrolment by College and gender:**

<b>College</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Karonga	930	503	1,433
Kasungu	1,578	847	2,425
Lilongwe	1,535	818	2,353
St. Joseph	887	473	1,360
Blantyre	1,329	716	2,045
St. Montfort	1,623	890	2,513
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,881</b>	<b>4,248</b>	<b>12,129</b>

**Source:** Malawi Government 2003

At the University level the gender gap has remained wide. The table 8 below illustrates the situation between 1998 and 2003.

**Table 8: Total university enrolment by year and Gender:**

Year	Male	Female	Total
1998	72%	28%	3,385
1999	74%	26%	3,955
2000	74%	26%	3,977
2001*	62%	38%	931*
2002*	67%	33%	970*
2003	69%	31%	5,315#

**Source:** University of Malawi 2003

Note: \* Enrolled candidates for year 1 only

# Mzuzu University not included

Generally there is an improving trend towards closing the gender gap at the University Education levels. More work is needed to improve the girl-child education situation at primary and secondary school education levels in order to close the gender gap at University education level.

In adult literacy education, there are more females than males. In 2002/03, out of 47,991 learners, 41,854 were females representing 87%. . In early childhood development centres, out of 135,436 children enrolled in 2003/04, constituted 62% an indication of gender stereotyping at an early age. All parents in both rural and urban areas should be encouraged to send their children aged between 3 and 5 to pre-schools/ECD centres regardless of their sex.

### **C. WOMEN AND HEALTH**

#### **Introduction**

Women in Malawi bear the disproportionate burden of the country's overall poor health status. The country's Constitution states that policies and laws in Malawi must aim at providing adequate health care "commensurate with the health needs of Malawian society and international standards of health care." The Constitution further recognises that Malawi must achieve "adequate nutrition for all in order to promote good health and self-sufficiency."<sup>1</sup>

The women and health critical area of concern was shaped by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994 and the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, 1995 and the development of the Malawi's National Platform for Action.

#### **(a) Achievements**

In order to address the poor health status of Malawians, the Government has put in place and expanded programmes aimed at improving the maternal and child health of its population such as:

- Antenatal Health Services
- Under five Clinics
- Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI)

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<sup>1</sup> . Malawi Constitution, section 13 (b).

- Malaria Control Programme including provision of treated mosquito bed nets with special focus on pregnant women and under 5 children (free) and reducing cost of mosquito nets for rural people.
- Exclusive Breast-feeding campaigns
- Civic education on cervical and uterine cancer as well as ulcers, Blood Pressure and diabetes
- Bicycle ambulances for easy access of expectant women to hospital
- Provision of more hospital beds for gynaecological patients
- Family Planning Clinic
- Emergency of NGOs spearheading reproductive health initiatives e.g. Banja La Mtsogolo (BLM) and National Family Planning Association (NFPA).
- Safe Motherhood programme, being implemented in 15 districts.
- Training of Midwives nurses
- Training of many traditional Birth Attendants (TBA) to provide reproductive health services in rural areas.
- Reproductive health policy and program and a gender and reproductive health committee established under Ministry of Health
- Development of nutrition programmes in Ministries of Gender and Community services, Health and Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security.
- Development of MPRSP that is an implementation tool for pro-poor programmes which has all the Beijing Platform of Action critical areas within its pillars and objectives.

### **(c) Lessons learned**

Major lessons learned at these levels of education and training of women and the girl child include:

- Successful policy formulation is the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and strong political will and commitment should lead and direct the process.
- Conformity to international commitments and the right conditions in the country are necessary for successful policy reforms and change.
- Maintenance of national consensus in the implementation of reformed/new policies involving several players helps to steer development in the right direction.
- Social mobilization campaign is essential for wider participation and the reduction of gender gaps in education and training women and the girl-child.
- The creation of the open and democratic society is central to people centred development initiatives and promotion of optimal people's participation.
- Specific interventions that target equity issues help to reduce gender disparities in education and training programmes.
- Piecemeal approach to quality education and training such as the training sessions for service providers, limited teacher support, limited supply of textbooks and other teaching/learning materials and equipment, and irregular staffing and financial support to schools, training colleges and universities, makes it difficult to bring about desired quality improvements.
- A broad resource base is required in order to support massive education reform programme.
- Girls' empowerment through creation of social clubs is essential in increasing women/girls confidence to pursue education.
- Role modelling programs can provide alternatives to girls especially those in rural areas to advance in education.

### **i. Provision of Health Services**

The health facilities in Malawi are provided by the Government, the Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM), the private sector, traditional health providers, and households. By 1998,<sup>2</sup> for example, there were 24 health units, 345 dispensaries, 70 maternity units, 389 health control centres 28 rural hospitals, 28 hospitals managed by CHAM, 1 mental hospital, 21 district hospitals, and three central hospitals. A referral hospital has been established and is functional in Mzuzu, to serve the Northern Region. Within the context of a liberalised market, the number of privately owned clinics and hospitals has increased both in rural and urban areas.

### **ii. Reproductive Health Policy**

Malawi produced and launched its National Reproductive Health Policy in 2000 and also established a Reproductive Health Unit (RHU) in the Ministry of Health and Population in order to contribute to the reduction of the early childhood and maternal mortality rates.

### **iii. Family Planning Services**

Family planning services have increased and fertility levels have decreased from 7.6 in 1992 to 6.2 births per woman in rural areas and 4.5 per woman in urban area by 2000. These rates however are still very high because of the low education levels among women, leading to unplanned fertility.

The contraception prevalence rate has increased significantly since 1995, jumping from 7% to 26% in 2000 amongst married women.

Government facilities are the major sources of contraception use. Supported by international development agencies such as UNFPA, the Government is providing family planning services to 68% of current users, as compared to 59% in 1996. This is largely because the Government is dominant in its provision of injectables, leaving private medical facilities such as Banja La Mtsogolo to provide family planning services to 28% of current users. Shops and other private supplies account for 4% of current contraception users.

### **vi. Antenatal Care**

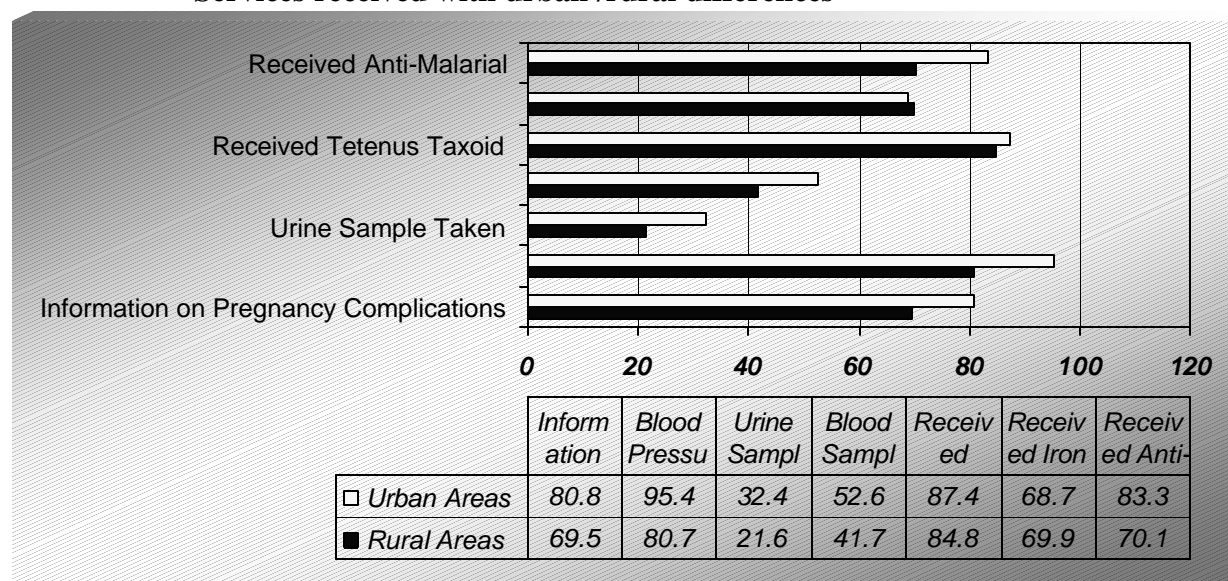
The number of women receiving antenatal care from a doctor or qualified nurse in Malawi increased slightly to 91% in 2000 compared to 90% in 1991. Nurses and trained midwives provided such services to 83% of the women whilst traditional birth attendants provide services to 3%. 8% receive antenatal assistance from doctors. 5% did not get any antenatal care. Although the number of women receiving antenatal care is high, most of them do not receive assistance from qualified personnel.

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<sup>2</sup> . E.g., in the Country's Report to the CRC, from where these figures are taken.



**Fig. 4: Showing pregnant women antenatal attendance and Services received with urban /rural differences**



The number of women delivering at health facilities is 55% and 44% of births are delivered at home, whilst privately managed facilities served 15% of deliveries.<sup>3</sup>

#### **v. Female Morbidity and Mortality**

Unlike indicators on family planning, maternal mortality has risen in Malawi since 1992. For the period 1995 to 2000, the maternal mortality ratio was 1120 deaths per every 100,000 births, a rise from 620 estimated for the period 1986 to 1992. Such a dramatic rise has been attributed to wrong estimates and the rise in AIDS cases, and AIDS-related illnesses. However, Life expectancy for women is 44 years at birth, down from 45 years at birth in 1987. The life expectancy for men is currently at 39 years at birth, again down, from 41.4 years in 1987. These mortality figures are against a crude birth rate of 37.9 and a total fertility rate of 6.2. The country's crude death rate is 21.1 and the infant mortality rate is currently at 121 per 1000 births, down from 159 per 1000 births in 1987 an indication that it is declining by 2003.

Preventable diseases account for most of the deaths in Malawi. AIDS, malaria, cholera and diarrhoea are Malawi's greatest killers. The Government runs and coordinates preventive and curative programmes. For example, for Malaria, the Government is encouraging the supply of impregnated bed nets with mosquito repellent to pregnant mothers. In 2000, at least 13% of households in Malawi owned impregnated bed nets.

The mortality among boys and girls has declined since 1992 when the under-five mortality rates were 234 deaths per 1000 live births. In 2000, the rate had dropped to 189 deaths for the period 1996 to 2000. The drop in the mortality rate of boys and girls represents progress made by the child survival programmes coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of Health and Population and improved access to clean water.

<sup>3</sup> . National Statistical Office and ORC Macro, *Malawi Demographic Health Survey 2000* (Zomba and Calverton; National Statistical Office; 2000),

#### **vi. HIV, AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

Malawi is heavily afflicted by the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Heterosexual contact accounts for 90% of HIV infections in the country, and this is a manifestation of women's powerlessness. The prevalence rate is one of the highest in the world, at 15% for the 15 - 49 age groups. In 1998, 46% of adult infections occurred amongst the youth, but young women accounted for 60% of those new infections. The HIV infection figures further show that more young women are infected than their male counterparts. This may partly be explained by the fact that women tend to be more biologically susceptible than men to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. The figures however, reveal some gender dimensions about HIV infections. As HIV is mostly spread heterosexually in Malawi, older men tend to have sexual intercourse with young girls and young women are not skilled to negotiate for safer sexual intercourse. The awareness of AIDS in Malawi is very high, at 99% among women and 100% among men. 84% of women and 92% of men knew in the year 2000 that a "healthy-looking person can have HIV. In 1995, such awareness was at 74% and 86% for women and men respectively. Current programmes coordinated by the National AIDS Commission of Malawi and implemented by Government agencies and non-governmental organisations have included the use of the media, public meetings, youth programmes, and information, education, and communication; and behaviour change campaign materials. AIDS prevention programmes focus on abstinence, limiting the number of sexual partners, delaying sexual experiences for young people and condoms use. Work has been initiated on gender and the human rights dimension of HIV and AIDS

These programmes aim at scaling down the impact and effect of HIV/AIDS epidemic especially among women. For instance, prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (MCT) Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) for HIV.

Youth Friendly Health Services have also been introduced in some health centres and hospitals to provide sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services such as contraceptives, treatment for STI's etc to girls and boys in a more friendly and conducive environment.

The Ministry of Gender and Community Services, Ministry of Health and other stakeholders have been producing, printing and widely distributing various IEC and BCC materials in form of posters, leaflets, manuals, booklets etc on sexual and reproductive health of women and the general population.

#### **vii. Access to adequate Nutrition**

Malawi continues to face malnutrition and over nutrition. Available information indicates that protein energy malnutrition remains a problem in Malawi. For instance, 49% of children fewer than 60 months are stunted and 50% (24%) of them are severely stunted. 25% of the children are underweight and 5.5% are wasted. There has not be any improvement on nutritional status since 1995. The 2000 MDHS results showed that 9% of women are malnourished, 12% overweight.

Notwithstanding this, the government of Malawi through the Ministry of Gender and Community Services, Bunda College of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and food Security; Ministry of Health; and other stakeholders has undertaken the following activities:-

- Produced nutrition, home management and hygiene training Manuals and resource books and to date oriented 100 extension workers on their use and how to conduct community nutritional status assessment. The books contents have included nutrition and gender; nutrition and HIV/AIDS.
- Conducted Food Utilization and Dietary Diversification (FUDD) campaigns and reached over 2.5 million women and men in proportions of 50% each. The aim is to diversify the food resource base and how the available food at the household can be utilised. This has influenced some changes in the diet.
- Has provided supplementary feeding to over 500,000 expectant and nursing women; and covered over 50 schools with school feeding programmes on pilot phase covering over 200,000 pupils. Its aim is to improve retention and completion rate of girls. The girl child receives a take home ration of one 50kg bag of maize, beans and groundnuts at times. All the pupils at the school get one wet ration of porridge during break time. During food shortage periods, every child in these schools received the take home ration.
- Some nutritionists have been trained at Bunda College of Agriculture.
- Nutrition education has been provided through various organisations and technology use in food processing to increase its shelf life is being intensified.
- Food eating guides to ensure adequate nutrition and its resource book has been produced. They however await printing and distribution.
- Food was distributed to the 6 million + Malawian who had food shortage by various NGOs supported by various donors in 2002 and 2003.

#### ***D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN***

##### **Introduction**

Malawi embraced violence against women as one of the priority areas because violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace.

##### **(a) Causes of Violence in Malawi**

Causes of Gender Based violence are based on cultural and traditional beliefs and practices that impact negatively on women such as: **Wife Inheritance** after the death of a husband; **Property grabbing** during divorce or death of a spouse; **Death cleansing in which** the wife is forced into sexual intercourse with another man after the death of a husband; **Hyena (Fisi)** a man who initiates sexual intercourse with a virgin or another man's wife without consent; **Removing dust** initiating sexual intercourse to girls and boys; **Society accepted Rape, "kusunga mwamuna" (keeping the husband)** through giving him another woman in the absence of his wife). **Kuhaha** betrothal of little girls; **Kuhahaza** tendency of men to have sexual intercourse with women in a manner dominance; **Kutenga Mwana** having first sexual intercourse 3 months after the child's birth while holding it as a cleansing process with the husband or a hyena in his absence; **Chimwamaye**: This is a wife or husband exchange. Culturally women are looked upon as sex objects and the socialisation process prepares them to look down upon themselves and believe that the more men propose them the more beautiful they are. Some media portray women as objects, property or weak creatures always needing protection. The double standards of sexual behaviour that requires men to be sexually experienced but women must remain virgins. The notion that some girls are good implies that it is alright to force sexual intercourse on bad girls.

Culturally it is believed that men are supposed to be aggressive and propose women first and women must be submissive. Culturally it is believed that men are the head of the family so whatever they do a woman is not supposed to argue.

### **(b) Achievements**

Malawi has ratified a number of international and regional instruments that protect women and children against gender based violence. At international level Malawi has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. (CEDAW) which affirms the need for the elimination of discrimination against women and guarantees women equal rights with men in all sphere of life such as education, employment, health care, voting, nationality and marriage. In pursuant to this, General Recommendation 19 (1992) of the committee on CEDAW states that: ***“Gender Based Violence, which impairs and nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under general international law or under human rights conventions, is discrimination. States may also be responsible for private acts if they fail to act with due diligence to prevent violation of rights or to investigate and punish acts of violence and providing compensation.”***

At SADC level, Malawi along with other SADC member states signed the addendum to the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development on the Prevention and Eradication of violence against women and children. Under the addendum, all SADC member states committed themselves to take urgent measures to prevent and deal with increasing levels of violence against women and children and repealing and reforming all laws, amending constitutions and changing social practices which still subject women to discrimination and enacting empowering gender sensitive laws.

At national level, the Malawi Constitution of 1995 section 24 sub section (2) states that “women have the right to full and equal protection by the law and have the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their gender or marital status ---. ***“any law that discriminates against women on the basis of gender or marital status shall be invalid and legislation shall be passed to eliminate customs that discriminate against women, particularly practices such as:***

- ***Sexual abuse, harassment and violence;***
- ***Discrimination in work, business and public affairs; and***
- ***Deprivation of property, including property obtained by inheritance.”***

In order to address the domestic violence issue, work has been started to enact Domestic Violence Legislation emanating from the provisions of the Constitution.

Further the MNPFA for a period between 1997-2000 identified Violence against women as one of the four thematic areas. The MNPFA is now fully supported and guided by the National Gender Policy (2000) and National Strategy to combat Gender Based Violence (2002) while MPRSP has included gender based violence under crosscutting issues. The gender approach had to be taken because violence can not be accepted whether on women, men, girls and boys for no development can take place in a violent society. Gender based violence in Malawi prevails in workplaces, public places, such as education institutions, hospitals, prisons, police cells, lake shore areas as well as in the domestic arena. Gender based violence takes many forms such as psychological/mental, physical, economic, social and sexual abuses.

Kanengo Police station Victim Support Unit has reported that gender based violence (GBV) cases involving women and children are higher than those involving men as shown in table 12 below:

**Table 12: GBV cases at Kanengo involving women and men**

Year	Women Men children*	Total
2001	19 1 0	20
2002	119 5 0	124
2003	300 10 32	342
2004	10* 0 0	10

*\*For 2004 Only 10 cases were recorded in January*

*\*Most children's cases are sexual abuses (defilement) from age 2 to 16 years.*

Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC) also conducted a study on Violence against Women at the work place (1999). The study findings showed that there are also many forms of violence taking place at the work place. Table 13 below shows reported GBV cases by sector.

**Table 13: Reported GBV cases by women survivors by sector %**

Form	Agriculture	Commercial	Industry	Other Institutions
Economic	63.4	38.9	53.9	44.4
Psychological	16.1	11.1	17.6	40.2
Physical	1.8	2.8	0.0	40.2
Sexual	3.6	8.3	2.0	2.6
Other (social)	11.6	38.9	26.5	6.8

**Source:** MHRRC, 1999.

NOTE: Due to rounding up of figures, the totals do not add up to 100%

In both rural urban poor areas, sexual activity is apparently becoming a source of comfort among the poor, despite strong local condemnation of such practices.

Early marriages, teenage pregnancies, cases of defilement and rape, are commonly reported to the police, communities and the media. Reports from the country's refugee camp disclose that many young girls do not stay in the camp for long. Instead, they move to urban centres where they are believed to engage in commercial sex. Currently, there is no law on trafficking and exploitation of women for sexual purposes. In cases where the law could be invoked, punishment is not deterrent. There are however, mechanisms to support the rehabilitation of victims and the reform of offenders but these are inadequate.

### **(c) Trafficking of Women**

Incidents of trafficking of women are increasing in Malawi. For example, in 1998/99 14 Malawian girls were deported from Brussels where they had been trafficked to work as sex workers. In 2003 there were reported cases of over 100 boys and 100 girls being trafficked to the sex industry in Europe, Asia and the USA annually; and being sexually harassed along the lakeshore by tourists. There are also emerging businesses of casinos and brothels, where young girls and boys from 12 years and above are victims of sexual harassment.

The Government of Malawi is aware of this problem and is currently putting in place mechanisms to address the issue. For instance, three trafficking syndicates were broken into and the cases were taken to court. The cases could not be concluded because of lack of legal basis for prosecution. A special Law Commission on Penal Code observed that there was no law that directly punish traffickers in Malawi. Accordingly, the Commission proposed a new provision into the Penal Code to punish such criminal act. The proposal to enact the new law to address trafficking of peoples more especially women and children have been presented to Parliament and are yet to be considered.

#### (d) Progress on GBV

Since violence against women is rampant, the government of Malawi is working hard to deal with the situation and several measures have been put in place. Some of them are:

- Malawi has developed a National strategy to Combat Gender Based Violence (2001-2006). The strategy was developed through a consultative process and its aim is to guide to Government institutions, community based organisations, the civil Society and the donor community on GBV issues. The GBV Strategy was launched on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2003. 10,000 women, men, boys and girls in proportions of 25% each witnessed the launch. A solidarity match preceded the launch.
- The entire Wills and Inheritance Act has been reviewed to address the various gender gaps in the provision of the current law. Property grabbing is a very big problem in Malawi. The Wills and Inheritance act has looked at fair distribution of the deceased estate, definition of dependants, immediate family, revocation of a will upon divorce, will writing, property grabbing and its enforcement, administration of deceased states among others.
- A Domestic Violence Bill draft Act has been submitted to Ministry of justice for processing into a bill.
- Malawi created awareness on GBV in 1998 and a petition was presented to the President on 8<sup>th</sup> March at an International Women's Day commemoration that attracted over 3000 decision making and influential leaders.
- Since 2000, Malawi has joined the International community in commemorating in a coordinated manner 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence, which starts on 25<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December annually. During this period the Ministry of Gender and Community Services coordinates the implementation of GBV Activities by Government Ministries, Non-governmental Organizations, Private sector and Faith Based Organizations. Several activities are conducted during this period and during the 2000, 16 Days of Activism campaign, a total of 700 Community Action Groups (CAGs) were formed to deal with Gender Based Violence cases. A total of 500,000 community members were reached with face to face interaction and over 2.0 million people were reached together with those covered by the media.
- In 2001, 63 Community Action Groups from eight (8) Districts were trained on Human rights issues, Gender Based Violence and how to deal with the issues. Victim support units were established in police units in all the 28 districts in Malawi to assist victims of GBV with counselling. In addition, a total of 6 communities were trained on problems of property grabbing and how to deal with the issue reaching a total of 10,000 individuals in proportions of 25% each for women, men, girls and boys. In the same year, the media reached over 2.5 million people.

- To date, over 5.0 million individuals have been reached with GBV messages, trained and given various services on dealing with the issue.
- A combating gender based violence project is implemented in 4 districts in Malawi and a training manual on Gender Based Violence has been developed.
- Training of service providers on gender based violence is being done and several NGOs/Civil Society have initiated programs to combat specific aspects of gender based violence like property grabbing, defilement and rape among others.

## **E. WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT**

### **Introduction**

Even though Malawi has not experienced armed conflict since Independence, war of other countries of the world has directly affected Malawian citizens. For example, during the Mozambican war, Malawi hosted 1.2 Million refugees. Following the Burundi and Rwanda; and the internal Somalia and Democratic Republic of the Congo Conflicts, Malawi is hosting refugees from these countries at Dzaleka and Mwanza camps. This has contributed to environmental degradation, proliferation of small arms that has triggered armed robbery more especially snatching women's luggage/bags and being killed during the robbery; and drugs and human trafficking. In 2003, Police reported that they had apprehended over 2500 drug traffickers compared with 500 in 1995; had over 20,000 reported cases of bags snatching of which 65% was from women and children. Over 50 women were killed during armed robbery and over 500 girls and boys at 50% each are/have been trafficked. Peace is one of Malawi's critical areas of concern in the National Platform for Action. Within this critical area of concern are the issues of armed conflict and robbery that deny women and girls their peace.

### **(a) Achievements**

- Women have been involved in peace building and conflict resolution in a number of ways. Malawi's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is a woman who has been involved in a number of negotiations such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Burundi, Zimbabwe and Rwanda.
- Malawi has offered Programmes to the refugees who are currently in the camps. Such programmes which target mainly women include Business Management, Nutrition, Skills Training and Orphan Care.
- Community Policing Services have been introduced in all the Police Units in Malawi in the past 5 years to assist in dealing with robbery; women, girls and boys, and drug trafficking. Women are members of community policing committees and are therefore, involved in conflict resolutions.

## **F. WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY**

### **Introduction**

The backbone of Malawi's economy is agriculture and it contributes 40% to National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 90% to export earnings. 91.8% of women are engaged in subsistence agriculture which is the largest supplier of food to Malawians. Only 16% are in paid employment. This means women's contribution to a large extent is not included in the National GDP. In comparison 71% of the women engaged in off farm employment earn cash income

compared to 24% who do not get any pay. The productivity from farming done by women is generally low due to their limited access to agricultural extension, training and farm inputs. According to the UNDP 2003 Human Development Report, adult literacy rate among women is 47.6% while that of men is 75% having risen from 30% and 45% respectively. This limits their access to information on agriculture production and consequently resulting in low productivity on women's farms. This scenario contributes to a large number of poor women i.e. 65% in urban and 60% in rural areas. There has been a decline in land holding sizes due to population pressure and liberalisation of tobacco production, which has pushed the women food production into marginal land.

The education levels among women have resulted into limited employment opportunity. For example, only 24% of women are in formal employment compared to 71% men. Only 13% of women compared to 5% in 1995 were in management positions as compared to 87% for men (MPRSP 2002, p88). Further, the majorities of women are concentrated in middle management position, which in many cases are low paying jobs. The Lower education levels and literacy levels; and low incomes among women have also led to low economic base for women which directly contributes to high infant mortality and morbidity rates at 103.8/1000; high under 5 mortality rate at 188.6/1000 and high HIV infection at 16%. This worsens the poverty situation among women.

Although there is no law that bars women from taking bank loans in their own name and right, many commercial lending institutions have insisted on a male guarantor, usually a husband if the woman has no sufficient collateral. The requirement for collateral and guarantors prejudices women more than men. Most women do not have assets that can be accepted as collateral due to poverty. Rural households (defacto and dejure) are the most affected. Coupled with this has been failure to meet the SADC declaration of at least 30% decision making positions to be held by women; poor communication network and technology uptake for the production of value added products.

#### **(a) Achievements**

Since Beijing +5, there have been a number of initiatives taken to address the issues of women and the economy country wide. These include:

##### **i. Mainstreaming gender in all development activities:**

The Government having identified gender gaps in all development areas developed and launched the National Gender Policy to be implemented between 2000 and 2005. Its aim is to reduce gender disparities in the economy in order to reduce poverty through improving education and training, agricultural productivity, environmental management, governance and human rights and improving access to health facility and food and nutrition security. (National Gender Policy, pp26).

##### **ii. Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP)**

Malawi developed the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP) and it has identified gender inequality as one of the factors contributing to poverty, as such strategies that address gender and empowerment issues have been put in place to cut across the 4 pillars in the MPRSP document.



### *iii. Enhancing Women's access to Credit Resources*

Women's access to credit has improved as evidenced by the increased number of micro financing institutions for women from 3 in 1990 to 15 by 2004. Women constituted 15% of those having access to credit in 1995. The proportion of women borrowers has increased to close to 50% by 2004 from 10% in 1995. This has resulted into an increase in the number of women engaged in off-farm business activities from 3,000 in 1995 to 95,000 by 2004. The number of women trained in business management also increased from 20,000 to 120,000 during the same period. In the economic activities programme run by the Ministry of Gender and Community Services, alone the number of women reached with business management increased from 10,000 in 1995 to 87,000 in 2004 while access to credit has increased to 54,773 in 2004 from 5,000 in 1995. The number of women reached with technology increased from 100 in 1995 to 5,000 by 2004. The government through the Ministry of Gender and Community Services has also signed a credit scheme and deposited close to US\$705,882.4 (US\$1= MK85.00) credit guarantee fund to be used as collateral. This has enabled the 70% poor women and 30% men to access loans from Stanbic and Malawi Savings Banks. It should be noted that before the affirmative action with commercial banks in 1995, women were not allowed to obtain a loan from banks. That is why tables 1 and 2 above show zero borrowing in some commercial banks. Some credit facilities have been established through Government collaboration with donors like World Bank, IFAD, USAID, Germany Government, UNDP and European Union (Annual Report on Poverty – 1999, p45). The intention is to facilitate the involvement of 70% poor rural women and 30% men to engage in off-farm activities in order to economically empower them and improve their access to food. Some of the micro-finance institutions that have been established include:- Malawi Rural Finance Company (MRFC), Small Enterprises Development of Malawi (SEDOM) and Pride Malawi with the initial capital from the government and FINCA, NABW, UNCDF among others with donor funds.

### **iv. Employment**

Malawi's Constitution provides that every person has the right to "freely engage in economic activity, to work and to pursue a livelihood anywhere in Malawi."<sup>4</sup> The Constitution further guarantees the rights to fair and safe labour practices, to form and join trade unions, fair wages and equal remuneration, for "work of equal value without discrimination of any kind, on the basis of gender, disability or race."<sup>5</sup> The Employment Act 2000 attempted to apply these principles to the employment contract in Malawi, but discrepancies still remain. For instance, employed women in Malawi predominantly work in agriculture activities that require manual work. Of the total economically active women in Malawi, 91.8% work in agriculture and contribute 70% of the agricultural labour force. Yet they receive less than men for equal, if not more work in many of Malawi's tea and tobacco estates. In a study of food security in the tea and tobacco estates in 1998, it was revealed that women and men were picking tea and grading and packaging tobacco. Men received K300.00 (US\$9) per month and women received K180.00 (less than US\$5) per month (MK1 = US\$35). Trading employs 31.4% of the total labour force of which 3.6% are women. Community and social service account for 35.7% of the total labour force of which 2.1% are women. Manufacturing employs 20.2% of the total labour force out of which, 1% are women. Education employs 39.6% of the total labour force and 1.4% are women.

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<sup>4</sup> . Malawi Constitution, section 29.

<sup>5</sup> . Malawi Constitution, section 31.

Health and social work employs 40.9% and 0.58% are women. Generally there are few women in formal employment than there are men.

Women tend to concentrate in gender-stereotyped employment that mirrors their culturally accepted roles such as petty trading and agriculture. As already observed, efforts are being made to train men and boys in the non-traditional fields like Nursing and home economics and women and girls in non-traditional science fields such as engineering and law. To achieve this, the University Colleges in 2001, adopted a policy which states that 40% of its faculty positions be occupied by women by 2006, partly to provide role models for girls and women who aspire for further studies. Programmes such as the promotion of girls and women role models are increasingly becoming common and women achievers are generally well accepted in Malawi. Further, employed women are entitled to 90 days maternity leave to enable them combine professional and reproductive roles. Discussions on paternity leave have been attempted but Malawi has no policy yet on this.

Deliberate effort has been made to encourage women, men, girls and boys to go into non-traditional jobs which are more paying and satisfying such as the army, Police, engineering, mechanics and nursing. Girls and young women are encouraged to go into scientific fields such as medicine, mechanical engineering, Civil and Electrical engineering; couples in long-distance track and bus driving in order to address gender gaps in employment . There have been initiatives to encourage young men and boys to go into non-traditional professions such as nursing and midwifery. Table 14 shows the number of men and women employed in non-traditional fields.

*Table 14: women and men employed in non-traditional fields*

<b>Employment</b>	<b>Year 1995</b>		<b>Year 2004</b>	
	<b>No. females</b>	<b>No. males</b>	<b>No. females</b>	<b>No. males</b>
Military	-	3500 (150)	136 (11 Off)	4864 (239 Off)
Police Service	235 (10 off)	3950 (240 off)	1265 (50 Off)	6000 (500 off)
Medical Doctors	6	75	37	86
Engineers	-	7	3	15
Surveyors	-	5	4	14
Scientists	50	150	250	500
Mechanics	-	200	6	300
Auto-electricians	-	150	15	1500
Electricians	-	500	50	2500
Nursing and Midwifery	500	2	1500	500

**Source:** Compiled from various sources

Deliberate efforts have been made to provide conducive, working conditions for female employees. For example, Malawi provides a 90 days maternity leave for working women to exclusively breast feed their babies and recover before returning to work. The maternity leave

has assisted many women to continue with their employment life while performing their reproductive roles.

*v. Guidelines for Human Resource in Public Sector*

To ensure that gender issues are addressed within the public sector employment framework in order to encourage women's participation, gender has been mainstreamed in the Human Rights provisions and guidelines have been developed to address issues of recruitment, promotion, postings and sexual harassment among others.

**vi. Campaign on Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE)**

The Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) programme and its social Mobilisation Campaigns encouraged many girls to enrol, remain and complete the school cycle. The provision of tuition for girls who got selected to Secondary School and the University has assisted girls to attain high education qualifications, which is key to high economic opportunities and employment.

**vii. Removal of school uniform and school fees:**

The improvement of school facilities including construction of community schools; the removal of school uniforms and fees; provision of school feeding programme in some schools has contributed to increased enrolment and retention rate of girls in schools. Education is one of the major contributing factors to growth and development in the country's economy (UNDP Human Development Report 2003, pp 95).

**viii. Gender Department**

The gender Department which is the National Machinery for Gender in Malawi is mandated to coordinate the mainstreaming of gender into development activities in the country, through the provision of guidelines and standards for the mainstreaming of gender need to be intensified.

*ix. Promotion of entrepreneurial skills for women*

Malawi has in the past years increased its focus towards the development of entrepreneurial skills for women through various programmes on small and medium scale business promotion. The initiatives have involved the training of women in business management, provision of credit, appropriate technologies and exposing Malawian women to external and internal market opportunities. For example, Malawi has participated in the WIB-SADC Fair in 2000 in Namibia, hosted the same fair in 2002 in Blantyre and is planning to take about 30 women (16 of whom will be small business women) to Botswana for this year's fair. In both fairs, Malawi won the first prize and a trophy and of 20% of the fair Malawian participants are exporting their produce to surrounding countries. Additionally, the women in agro-business have participated in cross border expositions in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**G. WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION MAKING POSITIONS**

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) calls on governments to "take appropriate measures to ensure women's equal access to, and full participation in, power structures and decision making by creating a gender balance in government and administration; integrating women into political parties; increasing women's capacity to participate in decision

making and leadership; and increasing women's participation in the electoral process and political activities". *"Women's equal participation in decision making positions is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can only be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account"*

**(a) Achievements**

As a positive response and a follow up to this declaration, Malawi government developed and implemented the Malawi National Platform for Action (MNPFA) 1997-which is a powerful agenda for the empowerment of women. This plan calls for the integration of gender perspectives in all policies and programmes. Further, Malawi as a SADC Member State also signed the SADC Gender and Development Declaration in 1997. By signing this declaration, Malawi committed itself, among others, to ensure the equal representation of women and men in politics and decision-making positions and at all levels, and the achievement of at least 30% target by the year 2005. Furthermore, Malawi developed the National Gender Policy and a Programme, to guide the implementation of gender programs in Malawi by all stakeholders.

Malawi government has been working extensively on the creation of awareness on the importance of women in politics and decision-making positions.

The National Gender Policy as an integral part of the national development objectives enhances the overall government strategy of growth through poverty reduction and its programme. Among the six policy thematic areas is Governance and Human Rights; that has gender specific objectives and strategies on a number of governance and human rights issues. Participation of women in politics and decision-making positions at all levels and respect for human rights as a means to achieving good governance are among them.

The 1995 Constitution has made provisions for equal participation of women in politics and decision making. In Section 24 sub section (1), the constitution states that *"women have the right to full and equal protection by the law and have the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their gender or marital status"*..... Sub section (2) further states that *"Any law that discriminates against women on the basis of gender or marital status shall be invalid and legislation shall be passed to eliminate customs and practices that discriminate against women such as discrimination in work, business and public affairs"*. Section 3, sub section (a) of the Constitution indicates *"gender equality as a principle of nation policy"*.

The MPRSP's (2002) Gender Empowerment Strategies, recognizes women's limited participation in decision making as one of the causes of poverty. It therefore, aims at: "enhancing women's participation in leadership and decision making processes through strengthening linkages, improving women's access to resources and benefits for their participation in leadership positions, including training in leadership, communication and assertiveness for women and girls and the monitoring and evaluation of placement of women in those positions."

The current statistics on participation levels in politics, local government and decision making in Malawi show that there is generally low participation of women in these structures. Table 16 below reflects the current situation:

Table 16: **REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICS AND DECISION MAKING POSITION IN MALAWI 1994 AND 1999**

Sector	1994 Total Position	1994 Women Position	1994 Women %	1999 Total Position	1999 Women Position	2003 Women %	2004 WOMEN POSITION	2004 WOMEN %
<b>Politics</b>								
Cabinet							19	
Cabinet	22	2	9	46	8	17	6	22.2
Parliament **	171	9	5.6	193	17	*8.8	27	14.5
<b>Local Government</b>								
Mayor	-	-	-	4	0	0		
Deputy Mayor	-	-	-	4	3	75		
Chief Executives	-	-	-	4	1	25		
District Commissioner	-	-	-	28	1	3.5		
Councillors	-	-	-	843	75	8.8		
<b>Public Service</b>								
Principal Secretaries – Grade S1	-	-	-	1	0	0	2	100
Principal Secretaries (S2)	-	-	-	49	11	22.4	7	19.4
Heads of Department (S2)	-	-	-	52	5	9.6		
Senior Deputy Secretaries (S3)	-	-	-	26	3	11.5		
Senior Deputy Heads of Department (P3)	-	-	-	54	6	11.1		
Deputy Secretaries (S4)	-	-	-	86	16	18.6		
Deputy Heads of Departments (P4)	-	-	-	116	15	12.9		
Administrator	-	-	-	63	5	7.9		

(S5)								
Administrator (P5)	-	-	-	199	26	13.1		
<b>Judiciary</b>	-	-	-					
High Court Judges	-	-	-	44	4	9.1		
Magistrates	-	-	-	153	15	9.8		
Diplomatic Heads	-	-	-	17	4	24	15	33.3

**source:** *women in politics and decision making in the SADC region, 1999; SADC secretariat gender monitor 2001; government of Malawi progress report on women in politics and decision, 2002*

\* an increase of 59% women in parliament

\*\* the electoral system is constituency based

- no information

Table I6 shows that apart from deputy mayors, the majority of the structures have low women's participation that is below the 30% target. A general lack of recognition of women, as leader's limited exposure and low educational attainment by women are some of the reasons for the low representation.

**TABLE 17: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES BY GENDER AND DISTRICT**

N O	LOCAL AUTHORITY	WARDS	MALE COUNCILLORS	FEMALE COUNCILLORS	PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN
1	Chitipa District Council	19	18	1	5.2
2	Karonga District Council	21	21	0	0
3	Karonga Town Council	-	-	-	0
4	Rumphi district Council	18	18	0	0
5	Nkhata Bay District Council	18	18	0	0
6	M'mbelwa District Council	36	36	0	0
7	Mzuzu City Council	14	13	1	7.1
8	Kasungu District Council	27	25	2	7.4
9	Kasungu Town Council	8	4	4	50.0
10	Kasungu Town Council	24	24	0	0
11	Dowa District Council	20	20	0	0
12	Ntchisi District Council	23	22	1	4.3
13	Nkhota kota Distr. Council	28	28	0	0
14	Lilongwe District	26	23	3	11.5

	Council				
15	Lilongwe Town Council	25	22	3	12.0
16	Mchinji District Council	28	27	1	3.5
17	Dedza District Council	10	8	2	20.0
18	Dedza Town Council	27	25	2	7.4
19	Ntcheu District Council	21	21	0	0
20	Salima District Council	10	8	2	20.0
21	Salima Town Council	24	22	2	8.3
22	Mangochi District Council	10	4	6	
23	Mangochi Town Council	22	20	2	9.0
24	Machinga District Council	10	5	5	50.0
25	Balaka Town Council	8	6	2	25.0
26	Liwonde Town Council	26	21	5	19.2
27	Zomba District Council	29	10	4	13.7
28	Zomba Municipal Council	29	23	6	20.6
29	Chiradzulu District Council	19	15	4	21.0
30	Blantyre District Council	25	21	4	16.0
31	Blantyre City Council	29	26	3	10.3
32	Thyolo District Council	8	4	4	50.0
33	Luchenza Town Council	30	25	5	16.6
34	Mulanje District Council	19	18	1	5.2
35	Mwanza District Council	18	18	0	0
36	Chikwawa District Council	18	18	0	0
37	Nsanje District Council	19	19	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>10.0</b>

**Source:** Mainstreaming Gender in Local Government: Experiences from Eastern and Southern Africa 1998

In general, there has been very limited representation of women in local government and yet these are lowest levels of the structures where representation of the interest of women at grass root level is eminent especially in the village, area and district development planning processes. The percent of women in local government structures is only 10%.

Equally the representation of women in Parliament by District shows very low levels of women. Women are represented in Parliament in only 11 out of the country's 11 districts as reflected in table 18 below.

**TABLE 18: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT BY DISTRICT BY GENDER**

DISTRICT	NO. OF CONSTITUENCY	REPRESENTED BY WOMEN MPs	REPRESENTED BY MEN MPs	PERCENTAGE
Dedza	8	1	7	12.5
Dowa	7	1	6	14.2
Lilongwe	22	2	20	9.0
Machinga	7	1	6	14.2
Mangochi	12	1	11	8.0
Mchinji	5	1	4	20.0
Mulanje	9	5	4	55.5
Mzimba	12	1	11	8.3
Ntcheu	7	1	6	14.2
Thyolo	7	1	6	14.2
Zomba	10	2	8	20.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>16.0</b>

**Source:** Beyond numbers: Malawian Women in Parliament. (2002)

Further, Table 18 above shows that only one district; Mulanje has the highest number of women in Parliament, 5 women MPs, followed by Lilongwe and Zomba with 2 women MPs. The remaining 9 districts have 1 lady MP each. Considering the commitment to reach 30% target, it is possible to set new targets for each district to ensure that there are women representing their parties in every district in the forthcoming election.

**(b) Opportunities for Malawi to achieve 30% women in politics and decision making levels**

Malawi went to the polls in May, 2004. Awareness campaigns on the importance of having women in leadership positions were intensified as a result the campaigns have yielded an increase of women from 17 to 27. Some of these are independent members of parliament which means they belong to no party.

Activities to increase participation of women in politics have been well articulated in the gender policy and programme and other ongoing initiatives including the 2004 International Women's Day commemoration.

The Donor Community is committed to achieving the gender equality objectives. Resources are therefore, available to support initiatives that are aimed at increasing women's participation in politics and continuation their ongoing a capacity building for the members who are in parliament.

Political commitments through political statements that encourage women to participate in politics have been and continue being made.



Political parties are willing to include women in critical power positions as evidenced in their manifestos presented at their conventions, and by some women who have been appointed in the party Executive Committees.

Creation of a Critical mass of women in parliament is an opportunity for encouraging other women to join. The fact that some women parliamentarians remained after the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> multiparty parliamentary elections indicates the level of confidence that constituents have for women MPs and this is an opportunity for Malawi to reach the set target.

The conducive, environment for NGO operations means that NGOs can complement Government efforts to encourage women to participate in politics through various programmes of support.

Renewed commitment by the Head of State through a communiqué at the end of 2003 SADC Heads of summit meeting in Tanzania is another opportunity.

Parliamentary women's caucus has facilitated initiatives for enhancing support for women.

Donor partners are committed to support initiatives. Recently donors provided funds for campaigns for women prior to the elections.

## **I. HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

The Malawi Government is party to a number of regional and international instruments that promote women's rights and gender issues. These include:

*The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratified on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1987 and its Optional Protocol ratified in, 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> reports were submitted in 2003). The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995; The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2001; and The SADC Gender and Development Declaration, 1997 and its Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of all forms of Violence Against Women, 1998; the Convention on the Rights of Children, 1991 Initial report was submitted in 2000. Currently Malawi is working on the second report for submission to the United Nations.*

The 1995 Constitution of Malawi is very progressive on women's rights and it has enshrined a Bill of Rights in Chapter IV and Section 24 sub-section 1 states that "*Women have the right to full and equal protection by the law, and have the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their gender or marital status .....*" Sub-section 2, further, states that "*Any law that discriminates against women on the basis of gender or marital status shall be invalid and legislation shall be passed to eliminate customs and practices such as sexual abuse, harassment and violence, discrimination in the work, business and public affairs; and deprivation of property, including property obtained by inheritance.*"

*(a) Achievements*

Malawi Government has implemented a number of initiatives in an effort to promote and protect the human rights of women in line with CEDAW, such as creation of a non-discriminatory gender sensitive legal environment, ensure equality under the law and practice and achieve legal literacy. The following are some of the achievements:

- CEDAW has been translated and printed into one official local language in 2003 and 2000 copies have been disseminated to the grassroot levels for easy reading and understanding in order to create awareness on the provisions.
- A CEDAW training Manual was developed and used to train trainers who have covered over 15,000 community members in three districts with awareness campaigns as a multiplier effect of the trainers of trainers in 2003.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup>, CEDAW report that, include 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> reports was compiled and submitted to the United Nations CEDAW Committee at the end of 2003.

At national level, Malawi has established a number of human rights institutions following the provisions of the Constitution of Malawi as follows:

**i. Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC)**

- The Human Rights Commission formed in 1996 has been mandated to protect and investigate violations of Human Rights including women's Rights as enshrined in the Constitution or any other law.
- This body has provided legal literacy on issues of human rights and responsibilities to over 500,000 people by 2003 through public hearings and mass media in relation to women's rights and human rights compared to none in 1995.
- Children's and women's rights are also covered in the work of the MHRC.
- A special committee on gender in the MHRC has been established.

**ii. Malawi Law Commission (MLC)**

- The Malawi Law Commission was established in 1994 and its mandate is to review and make recommendations relating to the repeal and amendment of laws.
- The Law Commission has a Special Law Commission on Gender Law Reform, which was put in place in 2001 to review the laws of Malawi. Additionally, to recommend for changes this will promote gender equality in Malawi. This commission has been put in place to rectify gender inequalities.
- By 2003, the Special Law Commission on Gender had conducted an overview paper on issues of gender based law reform that identified 5 priority areas of concern that included ***property and contractual law, family laws and the development of a Gender Equality Act***. To date, this Commission has completed the review of the Wills and Inheritance Act now known as Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection Act). Public hearings have been held with close to 500 opinion leaders, decision makers, chiefs and members of the civil society law.

A number of institutions are working towards creation of awareness on the Act emphasizing on the criminality of property grabbing and importance of writing wills. The Government has so far trained 2500 of its frontline workers as trainers of trainers on issues of property grabbing and the law provisions of the law.

### **iii. The Ombudsman**

The Ombudsman office was established in 1996 to investigate any and all cases where it is alleged that a person has suffered injustice and it does not appear that there is any reasonably available way of resolving the case by court proceedings; or by way of appeal from a court or where there is no other practicable remedy. From the reports of Ombudsman, there are more cases of discrimination and malpractice at the work place reported by women; about 10,000 cases compared to 6,000 by men were reported in 2003 compared to none in 1995.

### **iv. NGO Gender Coordination Network**

The NGO Gender Coordination Network was formed in 1998 and it has 7 sub-networks that include human rights network patronised by NGOs that are working specifically on issues of women's rights. The women's rights NGOs had provided legal literacy to over 680,000 community members at 70% women and 30% men by 2003 and , legal advice and counselling had been provided to 30,000 at 80% women and 20% men compared to 25,000, and 500 respectively by 1995.

Research on "In Search of Justice: women and the Administration of Justice in Malawi by Women and the Law in Southern Africa- Malawi, 2000; Violence and Social injustice against Women in the Workplace, study findings and recommendations, Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre, 1999. These were conducted to inform and influence change towards improving women's legal position by disseminating the findings on women's rights to the general public..

Experiences of the Malawian widows who were dispossessed of their marital property once their husbands died have been documented into a book titled: *Dispossessing the Widow: Gender Based Violence in Malawi developed by WLSA, one of the Gender NGOs.*

### **v. Other Women's Rights work**

Over 5,000 training manuals and 5,000 reader friendly materials on child rights such as Teachers Guide on Child rights, resource Book on Child Rights have been developed and children's rights have been mainstreamed in the teaching curriculum at all levels of the education sector.

A total of 765 Community Action groups, out of which 65 have been trained in gender based violence and women's rights issues handle the issues of violations of human rights in their communities.

Establishment of 50 Victim Support Units in Police Posts.

Awareness has been created on the CEDAW, CRC and Constitution of provision of human, child and women's rights to 3.5 Million Malawians by 2003 compared to 25,000 in 1995. This has been done through commemorations of International Days such as International women's day; the Day of the African Child, the day of the Family etc. Over 15 youth related NGOs and 2000 Youth Clubs have been established and their work have been publicised in the media.

The CRC has been translated into two major local languages. This has created a lot of awareness on child's rights in some parts of the country.

Some acts such as Land, Education, the Penal Code, and Police among others have incorporated issues of human rights as they relate to women's rights.

The Constitution of Malawi has been translated into local languages and disseminated widely by NGOs and Civil Society organisations.

Several networks on human rights have been established to present Malawi women's, men's, girls and boys' views on issues of national importance such as liberalization of some statutory bodies and companies; and education, access to justice, legal education, and the human rights of women. Some of the networks are Malawi Economic Justice (MEJIN); Civil Society Coalition for basic education; Civil Society Agriculture network and Nutrition Society of Malawi, NICE, Justice and Peace, MASSAJ, Malawi Law Society and Women's Lawyers Association among others.

A Rule of Law Programme under the Ministry of Justice is training paralegal officers to assist in accessing justice, an initiative that will see more women accessing justice at local level.

## **J. WOMEN AND THE MEDIA**

### **Introduction**

Traditionally women's roles are in the home while men's roles are in the public life. Consequently, what women do in public receives very little attention and what men do always makes news. Although in certain media organizations, women outnumber men, still men dominate in decision making positions. Refer to table 19 below:

**Table 19: The distribution of men and women in few selected media category.**

No	Institutions	Men	Women
1	Malawi Institute of Journalism	8	3
2	Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation	27	15
3	Daily Times	25	6

**Source:** Gender and media 2002

### *(a) Achievements*

A number of media organisations have mushroomed in Malawi. For example, Journalists Association of Malawi (JAMA), Malawi Media Women's Association (MAMWA), Malawi Institute of Journalism, African Bible College, Capital FM, Radio Alinafe, Radio Maria, NAMISA and African Women Journalist Association among others.

Malawi has made some achievements in community radio communication as compared to some SADC countries. Refer to table 20 below:

**Table 20:** Malawi's performance in community radio compared with other SADC countries

Country	Radio Community
Angola	0
Botswana	0
Lesotho	0
Malawi	2
Mauritius	0
Mozambique	5
Namibia	2
South Africa	21
Swaziland	1
Tanzania	0
Zambia	1
Zimbabwe	0

**Source:** Gender and Media Baseline Study, Malawi Report 2002

Malawi Government is gradually supporting the media by promoting women into decision making positions for instance the deputy controller of the state owned radio (MBC) is a woman.

50 females and 35 male journalists have developed interest in gender issues after gender analysis and mainstreaming in the media training conducted by SADC and Gender Links in collaboration with the national gender machinery. These have reported on gender issues continuously and have portrayed women's work positively.

British Council has sponsored the Africa Now Women Association with the production of a newspaper that carries various articles on women and more women are featured.

There has been an increase in reporting on women issue in electronic and print media over the years, which are negatively or positively.

## ***K. WOMEN AND ENVIRONMENT***

### **Introduction**

Women from around the world took a comprehensive global platform to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) known as the Earth Summit, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They used the platform to successfully lobby for an array of critical references to women throughout the official conference agreement called Agenda 21. An entire chapter was devoted to gender issues named Global Action for Women towards sustainable and equitable development. Women have an essential role to play in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound environment and indeed women are the custodians of the environment. Through their management and use of natural resources, women provide sustenance to their families and communities. As consumers, producers and caretakers of their families and educators, women play an important role in promoting sustainable development through their concern for the quality and sustainability of life for present and future generations.

*(a) Achievements*

Following the Beijing Conference, Malawi produced its own Platform of Action and Environmental and Natural Resource Management issues were considered in the Poverty alleviation and empowerment thematic area. The focus was to increase women's professionals, in the field of natural resources and environmental management and participation in natural resources and environmental decision making at all levels and aim to reach a gender balance. This resulted in the construction of a 20 bed female hostel at the forestry training college in 1998, and introduction of a Forestry and Masters in forestry, Aquaculture and environmental science Degree courses at University of Malawi (Bunda and Polytechnic College) in 2001.

The Government committed itself to implement agenda 21 of the Earth Summit particularly the aspects that relate to women. To this end the policies of Forestry, Natural Resources, Environment and Fisheries were reviewed and engendered in 2001.

Rural women's traditional knowledge and practices of sustainable natural resource use and management was integrated in the development of environmental management and extension policies and programmes from 1997 to 2003, over 5000 natural resource management committees were formed with 50% representation ratio between women and men.

The National Gender Policy has one of the six thematic areas as Environmental and Natural Resource Management. The Policy and the Platform call for the integration of gender perspectives in all policies and programmes and in line with the constitution of Malawi, the documents call for equality of women and men as a basis for women's full participation in the socio-economic development of the country.

All the Policies dealing with the Natural Resource and Environment Management have been harmonized so that there is no duplication of efforts and thereby allowing more women to participate fully in the management of the natural resources. By 2003, all forest reserves allowed populations surrounding them to harvest from them products like mushrooms, caterpillars, fruits and dead wood. A total of 800,000 women reported to have benefited from the natural resources in 2003 compared to 5,000 in 1995.

A gender policy as well as guidelines on how to mainstream gender in all Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) has been developed and it is operational. As a result gender is being mainstreaming in all Community Based Natural Resource Management committees.

A Research project was developed on gender and agro-biodiversity with a goal of developing gender sensitive methodologies, information and capacities in research in order to involve and promote women's key roles in promoting an environmental ethic, reducing resource use, influencing sustainable consumption decisions. This project involved 60% (5,000 women) indigenous women because of their particular knowledge of ecological linkages and fragile ecosystem management. Women were involved in all the stages of the project cycle. The women were trained in forest reserve management techniques by female lectures in forestry at the University of Malawi and female Head of Institutions in the forestry colleges. Over 60 Women are currently employed as Game Rangers and Guides by 2003 compared to none in 1995.

Women are involved in Income Generating Activities (IGAs) using forest products e.g. Bee keeping, Fish farming, Guinea fowl rearing and Fruit juice extraction among others.

A technical committee on the Environment was formed. Its composition includes gender experts to advise on the impact of Natural Resource and Environment use on women and ensuring that all developments using Natural Resources do not impinge on the women but rather that women share the benefits of the developments.

11 major NGOs are striving to mainstream Gender issues in the Natural Resource and Environment Management. Tables 22a and 22b show the NGOs and their functions:

**Table 22 a : 4 major NGOs involved in natural resource management and their functions**

Name of Institution	Type of work	Number Reached	Percentage		Services Offered	Gender Training	% of men/ women in decision levels
			Males	Females			
OXFAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Capacity Building</li> <li>- Research</li> <li>- Grant Provision</li> </ul>	20 Local Organizations and 5000 community members	40%	60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic Empowerment</li> <li>- Adult Literacy</li> <li>- Food Security</li> <li>- Family Planning</li> <li>- Leadership Training</li> </ul>	100 project staff 500 community members	40% Females 60% Males Thus 2 females, 3 males
Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Awareness/sensitization</li> </ul>	20 staff 29,555 Community Members	33% females 67% males
CAMPASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender Mainstreaming in CBNRM</li> <li>- Gender Analysis</li> <li>- Development of Gender Policy</li> <li>- Integration by Gender into</li> </ul>	1,867 communities	73%	27%	Gender Sensitization and training, advocacy	221,315 people 45% female	3 females 7 males thus 30% females, 70% males

	Appreciative Inquiry Training						
Coordinating Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (CURE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of Gender Trainings</li> <li>- Policy Dissemination</li> <li>- Documentation of Gender Information</li> </ul>	Over 500 communities	35%	65%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender trainings</li> <li>- Advisory Services</li> </ul>	500 communities reached  Trainings done to other NGOs	1 woman 3 men thus 10% females, 90% males

**Source:** CAMPASS 2003

**Table 22b: Other NGOs involved in Gender and Natural Resource management**

Action Aid	:Integration of Gender in their projects of health, water and sanitation, natural resource management and gender advocacy.
Canadian Physicians For Aid and Relief (CPAR)	:Gender and Natural Resource Management strategies address soil and water conservation techniques/ practices
Christian Service Committee (CSC)	:Has strategies for addressing gender issues in natural resource management, in particular, CSC train their beneficiaries on soil conservation, water management, fuel preservation, food management and family planning.
Enterprise Development And Training Agency (EDETA)	:Promotes women's participation in Natural Resource Management through involving them in bee keeping and usage of water hyacinth for the production of mushrooms
Evangelical Baptist Church of Malawi (EBCM)	:Encourages all decision-making bodies (i.e village committees) to have equal representation of men and women. Some of their activities in Natural Resource Management are in the Agriculture sector (e.g. soil conservation and dam building committees.
World Vision International (WVI)	:Compensation of all committees has been restructured and decision-making processes have been reviewed to accommodate all gender views/issues
Evangelical Lutheran Development Programme (ELDP)	:Promotes women participation in all activities of environmental rehabilitation and protection

**Source:** CAMPASS 2003



Malawi has benefited from the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) through a project called National Adaptation Programme for Action (NAPA) to provide mechanisms to adaptation to natural disasters of which the hardest hit are women.

Women have been involved in the management of Water and Sanitation at 30%-50% membership in committees compared to none in 1995. 30% have Accessed, electricity energy compared to 1% in 1995. Eighty percent of the population had Utilised wildlife resources compared to none in 1995. Fifty percent of energy serving technologies are produced by women compared to 20% in 1995; a Women's Mining Association has been formed with 150 members; and women are involved in mining and trading of precious stones and other locally found minerals compared to none in 1995.

## **PART THREE: INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### ***H. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN***

#### **Introduction**

Before the Beijing Conference, the issues of Women in Development were being coordinated by the National Commission on Women in Development (NCWID) that was established through an Act of Parliament in 1984. The NCWID's secretariat was under the then Ministry of Community Services which was restructured and renamed Ministry of Women, children, Community and Social Welfare in 1992 in response to the international demand to have women machinery to coordinate women's issues. The Ministry was renamed ministry of Gender and Community Services in 1999 to reflect its mandate as national gender machinery. The NCWID has since change to a National Commission on Gender and Development Trust (NCGADT) with the task of lobbying and advocacy for gender and development issues. The Ministry coordinated the Beijing Conference preparatory work for Malawi and its follow up activities.

#### ***(a) Achievements***

##### **i. The National Platform for Action**

After the Beijing Conference in 1995, Malawi held several follow up workshops to popularise the Beijing Conference and developed the Malawi National Platform for Action (MNPFA). The Platform for Action was developed through a consultative process from 1995 to 1997. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Malawi Dr Bakili Muluzi launched the Platform, on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1997 at COMESA Hall in Blantyre Malawi. The Platform Identified 4 priority areas for Malawi namely: ***Poverty Alleviation and empowerment, The Girl Child, Violence against women and Peace.***

The Plan of Action has been the guide and a constant reference point to all stakeholders in the advancement of women in government, private sector and Non Governmental Organisations.

Malawi committed itself and joined the SADC Heads of Governments and States to sign the SADC Gender and Development Declaration on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1997 at COMESA Hall in Blantyre, Malawi.

Malawi further committed itself and signed an addendum to the SADC Gender and Development Declaration on the eradication and elimination of violence against Women and Children in Mauritius in 1998.

##### ***ii. The Constitution of Malawi***

The Beijing Conference coincided with the change of politics in Malawi from a single party government to multiparty politics and a review of the constitution. The 1995 Malawi constitution is very progressive because it upholds the principle of gender equality and non-violence; and it enshrines a Bill of Rights in Chapter 4. This has been used to create a favourable environment for the development of the national platform for action, the national gender policy and programme and other gender responsive policy, action and initiatives in Malawi.

*iii. African Charter on Human and People's Rights; and rights of women*

In 2002 Malawi signed the protocol on African Charter on human rights and human rights of women in Mozambique. Efforts are underway for Malawi to ratify the protocol.

**iv. The National Gender Policy**

In order to put the gender agenda on the Malawi map, in 1998, the Government of Malawi commissioned 4 studies to assess the institutional capacity needs for Gender Mainstreaming, training needs assessment, gender concerns and issues and economic empowerment needs.

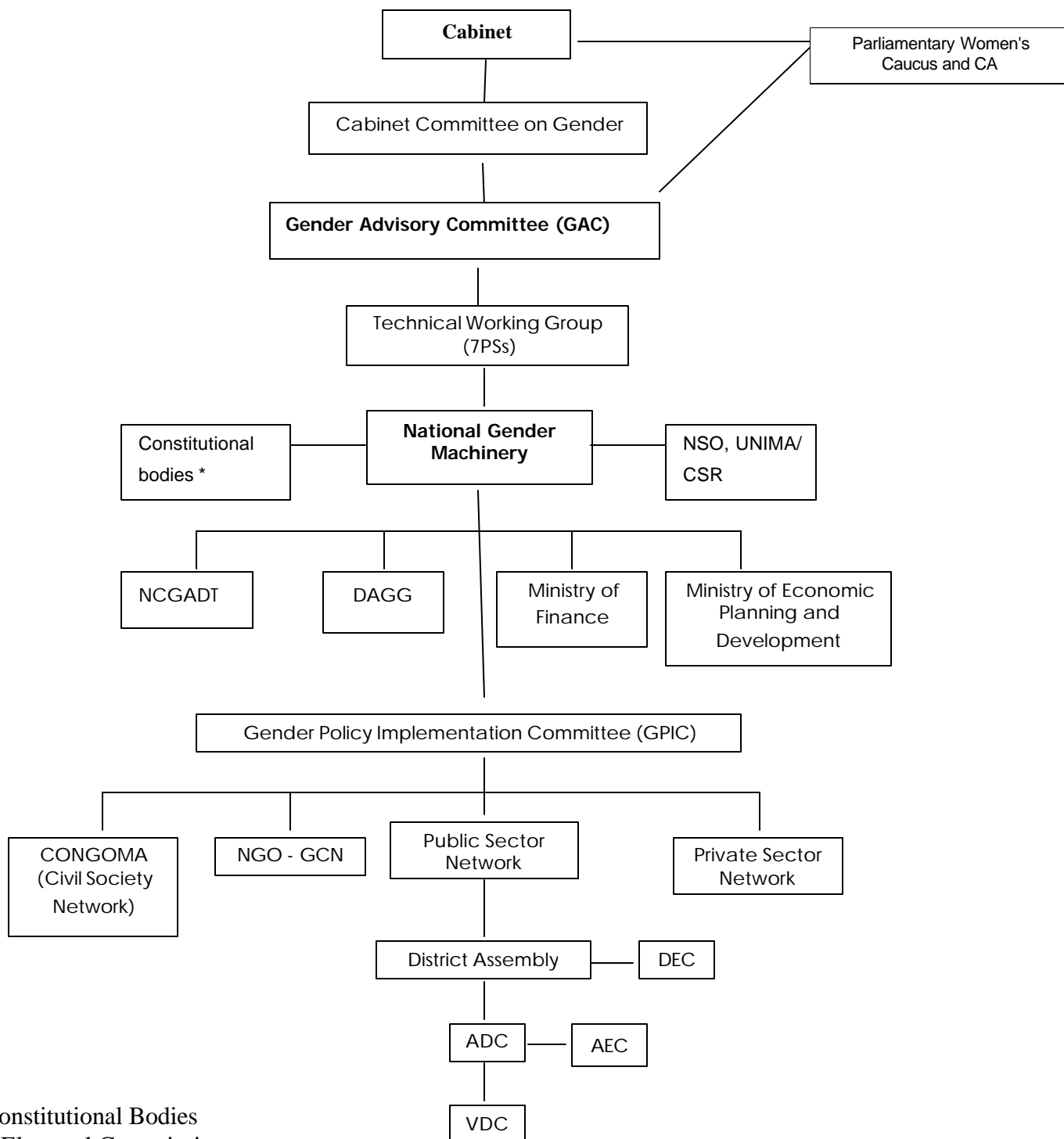
The three studies were a stepping stone for the production of the national gender policy, possible institutional mechanism for gender mainstreaming in Malawi and capacity building for gender analysis and mainstreaming at various levels.

The National Gender Policy was developed through a consultative process in all the then 177 constituencies in Malawi and 15 out of the then 24 districts were consulted on their understanding of gender issues and concerns in Malawi. The consultations involved women, men, widows and widowers, boys and girls, orphans, members of Parliament, chiefs, influential and opinion leaders, the aged and the handicapped. A total of 15 gender issues were identified and these were grouped into six thematic areas namely: ***Education and Training, Reproductive Health, Food and Nutrition Security, Natural resource and environmental management, Governance and Human Rights and Poverty alleviation and economic empowerment.***

The six thematic areas encompass the 4 priority areas that were identified in the National Platform for Action. The National Gender Policy goal is to “***mainstream gender in the national development process to enhance participation of women and men, girls and boys for sustainable and equitable development for poverty eradication***”.

The mandate of the National Gender Machinery is to spearhead the production, coordination, collaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National gender Policy and Programme and to provide backstopping services on gender analysis and mainstreaming to all its stakeholders.

The Policy, which was launched on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2000 proposed an implementation structure to the grass root that has since been reviewed to accommodate current issues. Below is the reviewed implementation structure.



Constitutional Bodies  
 \* Electoral Commission  
 \* Anti-Corruption Bureau  
 \* Ombudsman  
 \* Law Commission

It should be noted that the various networks are supposed to have sub-networks covering 6 thematic areas in the National Gender Policy. This was according to the old institutional structure which is currently under review.

In collaboration with Centre for Social Research, and National Statistics Office, the National Gender Machinery developed a gender research programme and trained a total of 50 research officers in gender research methods, data collection and analysis. These in turn developed a gender research training manual which is being used to train gender researchers in gender based research.

In collaboration with 20 Human Rights NGOs and other stakeholders, the National machinery has provided legal literacy to over 2.5 million people by 2003 compared to 5,000 by 1995.

In collaboration with the Human rights and gender NGOs, a domestic violence Bill has been drafted and submitted to Ministry of Justice for refining. It is anticipated that a law will be enacted by end of 2004.

The national gender machinery reports to the technical working committee of 7 Principal Secretaries (PS) that head the six thematic areas. These in turn report to the Gender Policy advisory committee comprising all the Principal Secretaries who in turn report to the Cabinet Committee on Gender and the Cabinet itself. At the apex, therefore, is the cabinet chaired by the President to show full political commitment.

At the level of the national gender machinery, are constitutional bodies that provide legal mandates and national research institutions that look at the gender research programme.

Below the National Gender Machinery are various funding agencies such as Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Planning and Development; Development Assistant Group on Gender (DAGG) and the NCGADT.

Below the financing organisations, is the Gender Policy implementation Committee comprising of all the Ministries and organisations implementing gender below which is the district assembly structure that include the area and village development committees.

At each level are networks that represent the 6 thematic areas. Among the networks are the Public Sector network, private sector network, the NGO Gender Coordination Network, Council for NON Governmental Organisations in Malawi (CONGOMA) and civil society networks.

It is proposed that a Gender Coordination network should also operate at the district level to ensure that gender is mainstreamed within district governance programmes. A gender focal point has been proposed to operate within the Planning and Development; or Finance and human resource Directorates of the District Assembly.

#### **v. Malawi Gender Trainers Team**

In order to operationalise the structure, the national gender machinery trained close to 100 trainers who formed the Malawi Gender Trainers Team from 1999 whose main mandate was to train trainers in gender analysis and mainstreaming and advocate for gender mainstreaming.

Out of the 100 trained, a total of 50 members were registered to conduct gender training at national and international levels. From 1999 to date the MGTT members have trained 120 policy makers, 3000 district assembly staff members, 150 media personnel, 2500 Ministry of gender personnel who have in turn sensitised over 2,510,000 community members on gender using various foras. Over 3000 Malawi Army Officers, men and their spouses were also trained in gender and development issues. Due to high attrition rate, in February 2004, 50 more gender focal points were trained. These came from various institutions in the public, private, parastatal and NGO/Civil Society.

50 District Assembly personnel comprising the District Commissioner and District Community Services Officer attended an orientation on the institutional structure; the national gender policy and the terms of reference for the gender focal points. However, an in-depth training for district officials is yet to be conducted.

#### **vi. Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (MPRSP)**

In the year 2001, Malawi developed the MPRSP and gender was taken as one of the cross cutting issues, and a critical area that has benefited from the funding.

#### **vii. Review of Laws and Policies**

A total of 150 Policy makers at Principal Secretary (PS') Level were oriented in gender and development in 1998 and 30 Members of Parliament in 2001. This resulted in the PS' signing of a Club Makokola Declaration in 1998. From that year on, the PS' have met annually to review the engendering process in Ministries and institutions. This has resulted into a review of several policies and programmes to make them gender responsive.

The Defence force policy was not to recruit female soldiers. After the gender sensitisation training, the policy was reviewed and the first 49 female soldiers' recruits were passed out in June 2000. To date, the Army has 150 female soldiers and 11 commissioned officer cadets.

The Ministries of Forestry, Environmental Affairs, Fisheries and Natural Resources; Agriculture, Irrigation and Food Security; Education Science and Technology; Wild Life and Tourism; Health and Population; Land, Physical Planning and Development; have engendered their strategic plans. The challenge is for these sectors to develop gender responsive policies.

The Government established The Law Commission, the Ombudsman, the Electoral Commission, and the Anti-Corruption Bureau as constitutional bodies. In order to address the gender based law reform, a special Law Commission on Gender was formed. The Gender Law Commission is working on the discriminatory laws that the public identified such as Wills and Inheritance Act; Marriage and Divorce Laws, Children Rights Citizenship Act; Defilement Act among others. The need to develop, Gender equality Act has also been high on the agenda of the gender law reform.

In 2002, 7 gender officers were trained in Gender planning and budgeting who in turn oriented 30 directors and trained 50 planning and budget officers in gender planning and budgeting from 8 Ministries. These reviewed their institutions' budgets for 2001/2002. The gender planning and budgeting, guidelines have been drafted and it is in its final stage of production. In the 2004 budget, 4 Ministries will be targeted with a systematic gender planning and budgeting at all levels and an Economic Governance Project has planned to work with the Ministry and Parliamentary Committees to conduct a gender analysis of the budget this year.

In the employment sector a gender mainstreaming, tool for the public sector addressing conditions of service among others has been drafted. Further, a gender auditing tool gender training manual and advocacy materials have also been developed. The Ministry is disseminating these tools for use by stakeholders.

#### **viii. Other Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives**

In 2002, the NGM coordinated the production of the gender based violence strategy and it was launched on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2002, the last day of 16 Days of Activism on Gender Based Violence; the Gender and the Human Rights Dimension of HIV and AIDS initiative commenced with the training of 80 focal points in Gender and the Human Rights Dimension of HIV AIDS from government and civil society organisations supported by UNIFEM and World Bank. Strategic plan on gender and human rights dimension of HIV/AIDS and a proposal were developed and submitted to UNIFEM.

The UN Secretary General's Office identified the countries with high HIV pandemic in 2003 and formed a taskforce. Malawi held two workshops with 85 participants to develop Malawi's position on Gender and HIV and AIDS, which the task force presented at a meeting in South Africa. Follow up work to launch the report and to develop a project proposal for support by NAC is underway.

The NGM has coordinated the commemoration of International days such as International Women's Day, World Rural Women's Day, 16 Days of Activism on Gender Based Violence from 25<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December, the Day of the African Child. It also collaborates with other institutions in commemorating the World Population Day and the World Food Day.

A team of trainers in Gender and HIV/AIDS programmes has been created. This team will among other activities train district officers in gender mainstreaming and in HIV/AIDS with the support from World Bank.

The Machinery has also coordinated the compilation of CEDAW, Beijing, CRC, African Regional Platform implementation and the SADC Gender and Development Declaration implementation reports.

#### **(b) Obstacles encountered and remaining gaps and challenges**

Even though the institutional structure is in place and progress has been made, there are so many problems that retard the progress in gender mainstreaming as follows:

- The National Gender Machinery's structure is not completely filled and it has a lot of gaps. For example the Gender Department had 36 posts for first Degree holder. All these posts are vacant because the incumbents have moved due to promotions and departmental transfers apart from deaths. The management structure is equally vacant in some positions.
- The officers do not have specialised skills in gender and development to take the lead in mainstreaming at district and regional levels where most of the grassroot interventions are implemented.
- There is a very big misconception and misunderstanding of gender and development issues at all levels. This results into unclear position of the gender agenda in certain institutions including documents. For instance, MPRSP has a gender as a cross-cutting issue but the reviewers do not understand its crosscutting nature; and in some decentralisation plans, gender is not included as an important cross cutting issue and as a planning and development tool.
- At community level, there is misconception about gender and advancement of women. Gender has been viewed by women, men, girls and boys as a means to disturb the social fabric of Malawian Society. The limited number of gender experts to provide the necessary training compounds the problem.
- Having gender as a department in a line Ministry marginalises it. As a result it gets very little funding despite inclusion of gender in important policy documents such as MPRSP.
- High turn over of staff due to frustrations caused by limited professional career and promotional opportunities.
- Most donors do not match their words with deeds. Consequently, there is a lot of talk and document development with little financial support.
- Lack of a Gender Equality Act to enforce all the provisions in the various policies, initiatives and status.

The five years period for the National Gender Policy ends in 2005. The challenge is to review the policy and to incorporate new and emerging critical areas of concern.

Gender mainstreaming at individual, household and community levels has not yet been internalised.

The expectation for gender mainstreaming is very high and it does not match with the allocated human, financial and material resources that would take it to the grassroot.

Gender insensitivity of many institutions, policies, practices makes the National Gender Machinery task an uphill.

The National Gender Machinery has limited gender and development capacity in terms of personnel, equipment and finance. Yet it is expected to lead and coordinate gender mainstreaming work at all levels.

Donors' commitment to funding gender mainstreaming work remains a big challenge because they give lip service to the issue.



An independent Gender and Development Institution operating within the public sector can provide the clout required to monitor and ensure mainstreaming in other institutions. The actual positioning of such a Ministry poses a challenge due to the current economic position of the country and remains a dream and a vision.

Changing the mindset Malawians to understand that gender is a development tool that would make work of all line Ministries and the civil society easy is far from being understood.

**(d) Way Forward/Recommendations**

- ❖ There is an urgent need to review the National Gender Policy and implement the reviewed implementation structure.
- ❖ The need to develop the Gender Equality Act can not be over emphasised. It is long over due.
- ❖ The National Gender Programme needs to be finalised and implemented and the GBV strategy, need to be implemented too.
- ❖ Resources from both donors and the Government need to be mobilised for gender mainstreaming work in Malawi.
- ❖ Gender planning and budgeting processes and work need to be intensified at all levels.
- ❖ Capacity for gender mainstreaming need to be built at all levels
- ❖ The NGM needs to be strengthened in all aspects in order to fulfil its mandate and its structure be included at district assembly level while Ministry of Economic Planning and development and Ministry of Finance should be trained in gender mainstreaming.

## **PART 4: MAIN CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THEM**

### **A Women and Poverty**

#### **(a) Challenges**

The Malawi Government is meeting a number of challenges in this area. Some of these are:

- ◆ Weaning the excess manpower from the agriculture sector to the non-farm based economy.
- ◆ Improvement of the quality of the products being produced by women while adding value and accessing national and international markets
- ◆ High demand for credit, by both men and women which is not being satisfied due to increased population growth and a dwindling economic base.
- ◆ The core poor who account for 28.5% of the population most of whom are women, are difficult to reach yet their immediate needs are practical such as food, shelter, cloth, and water could easily be provided though not sustainable. The challenge is to meet women's strategic interest in order to improve their position in the society. This empowerment, through training in skills and exposure of women to new technologies, remain a big challenge in Malawi.
- ◆ The HIV/AIDS pandemic has worsened the poverty situation because it adds 70,000 orphans to the orphan's pool annually who do not have support. The worst hit are women who are in many cases unemployed and are vulnerable in many ways. Coupled with this, is property grabbing/dispossessing. Such cases are increasing due to worsening poverty situation, leaving many women and children disempowered economically and without much support. Women spend more time caring for the sick thereby affecting their professional careers as in many cases they spend much time out of the offices while men are advancing in their careers.
- ◆ Women who go into non-traditional professional areas in the employment sector lack support mechanisms in the non-traditional fields. Most employers do not offer conditions of service that are responsive to the needs of women, particularly mothers, forcing others to drop along the way or to opt for alternative low paying professions that may respond to their reproductive needs.
- ◆ The lower representation of women in employment is a result of poorer and less opportunities in accessing employment; unequal treatment in employment and lower educational attainment.
- ◆ The numbers of women trained in various vocational subjects is very low indeed. This is a result of generally stereotype images and roles of women as household makers, thereby rendering them unfit or unqualified to take technical vocational subjects which are more paying.

#### **(b) Constraints**

The major constraints are:

- Lack of resources for training, supervision and providing business counselling and guidance to women in business, credit management, technologies adoption and research.
- Lack of a well-developed and established information management system and its technology both soft and hard ware, which results in poorly reported work and communication network.
- Limited amount of loan sources since most commercial banks are not in a position to accept rural women and men as clients due to lack of collateral.

- Although access to credit increased after 1994, agricultural credit for rural women dwindled because the government stopped provision of credit facilities. Instead, the credit facilities were provided by private financial lending institutions such as Malawi Rural Finance Company (MRFC) until 2003 when the facility increased loans for women farmers.
- The provision of fair marketing services has declined because the Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC), which has a network of markets, closed some of them and reduced its services to pave way for greater liberalisation of the agricultural market affecting women's productivity.

### (c) Recommendations

- ❖ The Government needs to match its commitment with action through mobilising funds for systematic implementation of all activities under the objectives of the different thematic areas of Poverty Alleviation and Empowerment in the MNPFA, National Gender Policy and Programme. There is also need to hasten the development of information management system, monitoring and evaluation tools in order to capture all the work done in the reports.
- ❖ The employment act needs to be reviewed to include other aspects in detail to encourage career advancement of women and their retention. Paternity leave should be provided and household responsibilities need to be shared to relieve women from the care economy so that they can participate equally in employment and poverty reduction.
- ❖ Career talks for women/girls should be given to encourage them to select/choose better professional fields.

## B Education and training of women and the girl child

### (a) Obstacles, gaps and challenges encountered

#### i. Primary Education

These included inadequate schools, teachers, teaching –learning materials, poverty and hunger, cultural practices and expectations such as parent influence, attitudes towards girls education, distance to school, attitudes and perceptions of teachers, teacher training and orientation, and misrepresentation of human rights and democracy. These issues contribute to high drop out rates of between 15 and 20 percent among girls and boys. More boys than girls dropped out in standards 1-4 and more girls dropped out of school in standards 5-8. The situation is worse in rural areas. See Table 9 below:

**Table 9: Rural urban differences in enrolment by gender**

Location	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Boys	Girls	Girls	Boys	Girls
National	54,074	50,255	30,056	28,821	22,165	20,197	7,878	10,761	11,431	9,130	15,516	14,801
Urban	1,432	1,382	804	786	819	805	344	427	522	426	628	559
Rural	52,642	48,873	30,252	28,035	21,346	19,392	7,443	10,334	10,909	8,704	14,888	14,242

**Source:** Adapted from Malawi Government 2000 in 2003

## **ii. Secondary Education**

Secondary education has received low priority since the advent of FPE policy in 1994. This has resulted into a number of problems such as:

- ◆ Inadequate and poorly maintained secondary school structures that has resulted into most girls secondary schools that were fully equipped to have no equipment for science.
- ◆ The community secondary schools where most girls are selected are poorly equipped and the majority completely lack equipment;
- ◆ Inadequately resourced and financed a situation worsened by the removal of the tuition from GABLE that has resulted into girls drop out of close to 50%
- ◆ Grossly understaffed with very few female teachers to act as role models for the girls.
- ◆ The learning environment is poor forcing the girls to stay out of school when they are menstruating due to lack of sanitary facilities.
- ◆ High student dropout rates due to pregnancy among girls; excessive breach of discipline among boys; poverty; hunger; lack of support due to death of both parents/guardians. This leaves the girl child as the carer of the siblings, of interest to continue with one's education on the part of girls.
- ◆ The primary teacher training education does not have adequate colleges or beds for females. It is inadequately staffed; financed, equipped and teaching/learning materials are not available.
- ◆ The technical and vocational education has a limited number of colleges and space for girls. In addition, it is inadequately funded and does not have adequate staff.

## **iii. University Education**

The universities in the country have limited bed-spaces for girls. This limits university intake per year. For instance, in 2003/04, out of 4416 eligible candidates, only 830 (19%) were selected by the university of Malawi. Other challenges faced by the universities include inadequate government subvention, staffing and equipment that would increase girls' enrolment. Libraries are poorly resourced with inadequate books and internet services.

## **iv. Other Education Programmes**

Available policies are not consistent with service provision. For example the ECD Policy states that all children aged between 3-5 years will have to be enrolled in pre-schools or ECD centres by 2015. By 2015, adult illiteracy rate should be reduced by 50% from the current level of 42%. The country should aim at total eradication of illiteracy by 2020. For adult literacy and early childhood development programmes, the main limiting factors have been inadequate financial resources, human resources, attitudes of communities and necessary teaching/learning materials and equipment apart from inadequate supervision. For adult literacy education, there is a total lack of linkage to the formal education system to facilitate continuity of education for adult learners.

## **(b) Way forward**

### **i. Primary Education**

- ❖ Continued provision/construction of more primary schools where people are and expansion of existing schools and related primary education infrastructures providing special facilities to cater for girls' needs.

Implement the provisions in the primary education framework such as:

- ❖ Staffing all primary schools with minimum adequate levels of trained teachers by 2012 and provide incentives to retain female teachers in rural schools to act as role models for girls.
- ❖ Equipping all schools with adequate female and male teachers, pupils' textbooks, teaching-learning materials and equipment that are gender responsive by 2012.
- ❖ Design and intensify the implementation of programmes related to issues of poverty, hunger, gender inequalities, human rights, democracy, dropout rates and life skills.
- ❖ Broaden the resource base for financing primary education.
- ❖ Encourage the democratic process to ensure free participation of stakeholders in FPE.
- ❖ Make primary education compulsory to reduce the poor of illiterates.
- ❖ Link the adult literacy programme to the formal education system and develop open-university policy to absorb adult learners of whom 80% are women.

### **ii. Secondary Education**

High government commitment need to be generated for this level as provided for in the policy from 2004. For example:

- ❖ Construction of 315 new secondary schools and rehabilitation of all existing secondary schools. Particular emphasis to be put on girls only schools to improve retention and achievements.
- ❖ A new policy is needed to steer education development at secondary schools level that will give girls and boys equal opportunity to enrol and complete the secondary school cycle.
- ❖ The Government needs to improve staffing, funding and equipment provision levels of all public secondary schools by 2012 while creating a conducive environment for female teachers to excel along their male counterparts.
- ❖ Costs sharing to be introduced in public schools to enable parents to take part in education of their children more especially the girl child.
- ❖ Strengthen networking and collaboration with the private sector in the provision of quality secondary school education by 2005 with a special fund for girl's education in form of scholarships.

### **iii. Primary Teacher Education**

Likewise the objectives laid down in PIF as stated below need to be implemented fully.

- ❖ Government should increase the number of teacher training colleges to ten and female intake to 50% by 2012.
- ❖ By 2012, all teachers in primary school should be trained and qualified and be taken through a diploma course at 50% enrolment for both males and females.
- ❖ Gender gaps should be totally closed by 2012 in all teachers training colleges.

### **iv. Technical and Vocational Education**

In the technical and vocational training the objectives and strategies in the policy need to be implemented fully as outlined below:

- ❖ Government should increase the number of technical and vocational colleges to at least ten and the bed space for girls by 2015.
- ❖ In collaboration with stakeholders, all technical and vocational institutions should broaden the courses offered by 2005 and provide a conducive environment for increased girls' enrolment.
- ❖ Government should put in place a policy to increase participation of the private sector in the provision of technical and vocational education with a special focus on girls and young women.
- ❖ There should be close and strengthened collaboration between the Universities of Malawi and Mzuzu on one hand and the technical and vocational colleges on the other to improve the quality of technical and vocational education in the country more especially for women and girls.

#### **v. University Education**

- ❖ Government should embark on expansion programme for the University of Malawi to increase bed space and female students' enrolment to at least 4000 by 2010 and 10,000 by 2015.
- ❖ Government should plan to open a third fully fledged university in the centre by 2015 that would have a 50% bed space and intake for females and females.
- ❖ The constituent colleges of the University of Malawi should become independent universities while other colleges like Magomero be up graded to offer Diploma and above courses with time in order to expand and offer more courses and increase females' enrolment.
- ❖ The private sector should be encouraged to invest in tertiary education that would provide 50% space each for females and males.
- ❖ By 2012, the existing two universities should completely close the gender gap currently existing between male and female students. A large number of students will be encouraged to enrol in non-traditional fields of study.

#### **vi. Other Issues**

- ❖ Government should strengthen the integration of special education for physically challenged children and students at all levels of the education structure (Primary, Secondary, Teacher Training Colleges, Technical and Vocational Colleges and University) and even in the adult literacy and ECD education programmes.
- ❖ Research on knowledge, skills and practices in collecting, analysing and presentation/dissemination of studies using sex-desegregated data is very limited. The Government and its partners should intensify training of researchers and practical applications of use of gender sensitive research studies and information collection, analysis and presentation methods.
- ❖ Malawi needs to: consolidate and universalize her FPE, pre-school and ECD programmes; fully integrate education for children with special needs across the education system; work towards elimination of adult illiteracy; and close the gender gap at primary; secondary;

teacher training; technical and vocational; and university education levels. These are the challenges that Malawi will strive to achieve in the first half of the twenty first Century.

## **C Women and health**

### **(a) Constraints**

In the implementation of the Beijing Platform and National Platforms on Women and Health, Malawi has encountered several constraints that include:

- Maternal mortality rate has nearly doubled over the past decade, from 620 to 1,120 per 1000,000 live births.
- Female illiteracy is still as high as 51% having decreased from 70% in 1995.
- Adolescent fertility rate is high at 172 per 1000 women aged 15 – 19.
- High teenage pregnancies that account for 65% of all first pregnancies.
- 58% of the people infected with HIV in Malawi (760,000) or 14.4% of the total population) are women and 80,000 of these women need anti-retroviral therapy (ARV) to prevent passing HIV to their new born babies.
- New HIV infections are high in among girls aged 15 and 24 years at 60% compared to 40% among boys of the same age.
- Inadequate budgetary allocation to the health sector in relation to the demand for the services and population growth.
- Inadequate drugs and other supplies.
- Inadequate health personnel consequently affecting the doctor/patient, and nurse/patient ratios.
- Unfavourable hospital working conditions resulting to brain drain
- Poor attitude of health personnel
- Nutrition is being given poor attention and inadequately funded with no career structures

### **(b) Challenges**

The Government is meeting the several challenges in addressing the critical area of Women and Health as follows:

- ◆ Taking health services to the people to increase access of such services by women and the general population. Due to inadequacy of services, facilities vis avis retention of personnel due to poor employment conditions.
- ◆ Inadequate resources to meet health care demands
- ◆ Community Home Based Care for AIDS patients has transferred the burden of care to the people/community whose providers are mostly women and girls.
- ◆ Lack of a coordination body for Nutrition. As a priority area for government, it needs to be given the attention it deserves through the identification of a coordination body to address the multifaceted nature of nutrition that touches production, utilisation, clinical issues care and curative initiatives and HIV/AIDS pandemic.

### **(c) Way Forward**

In order to effectively implement programmes concerning Women and Health, the way forward is to:-

- ❖ Create a conducive working environment for health personnel,
- ❖ Increase the budgetary allocation to the Health Sector,

- ❖ Mainstream gender in all aspects of health and not only in Reproductive Health issues
- ❖ Produce sex and gender desegregated health statistics
- ❖ Coordinate and strengthen Nutrition Programmes in line Ministries with proper career structure and provide adequate funding.
- ❖ As part of capacity development, there is need to train more nutritionists and dieticians.
- ❖ HIV/AIDS program to be mainstreamed in all sectoral programmes and Assemblies work that focuses on community based interventions.
- ❖ Mainstream gender in all HIV/AIDS programmes.

## **D Violence against women**

### **(a) Challenges**

- ◆ The biggest challenge in dealing with Gender Based Violence is to change the mindset of people on cultural beliefs and practices, which are deeply rooted in them. The challenge is to get all Malawians at all levels to commit themselves to deal with this evil at institutional, household and personal level. Unfortunately, culture seems to play a big role in its perpetuation.
- ◆ All custodians of culture like traditional leaders, religious organisations, politicians, employers and policy makers should be targeted with the appropriate messages of gender based violence.

### **(b) Constraints**

- Implementation of the National Gender Based Violence strategies only done as piece meal due to lack of donor support in the area – only GTZ and DFID through MASSAJ have taken up aspects of the strategy.
- GBV issues are given low priority in all sectors and considered to be normal.

### **(c) Way Forward**

- ❖ There is need to intensify awareness on Gender Based Violence and to empower communities to deal with Gender Based violence.
- ❖ More community action groups need to be formed and trained adequately and empowered to deal with Gender Based Violence issues in each and every village. The groups should be supported through provision of incentives in form of special recognition, visits, tours, features in the media.

## **E Women and armed conflict**

### **(a) Challenges**

- ◆ It is difficult to maintain refugees in the camps and there is an influx of refugees into towns and cities this at times increases cases of armed robbery, drug as well as women, girls and boys trafficking
- ◆ Controlling small arms, drug and women, girls and boys trafficking because of the new and sophisticated crimes



- ◆ The future of Malawian women married to refugees is not known bearing in mind that the poor rural and urban women and girl and boy children with little or no access to income are the most affected.
- ◆ Eliminating and eradicating GBV while respecting women's rights as being part and parcel of human rights remains a challenge in the Malawi Society.
- ◆ Educating Malawians about their rights, roles and responsibilities in the wake of democracy.
- ◆ Tracking of immigrants

#### **(b) Constraints**

- There is a problem of funds to run courses in refugee camps
- Limited technological base to track down armed robbery which is on the increase – for example controlling influx of criminals in the absence of developed immigration tracking systems.
- Absence of skills training for women to protect themselves and their children from various conflict situations.
- Breaking the women, girls and boys traffickers' syndicates, is a nightmare without requisite to curb this form of violence.

#### **(c) Recommendation and way forward**

- ❖ There is need to strengthen internal security on arms, drug and women, girls and boys trafficking.
- ❖ Tracking equipment and mechanisms for criminals, immigrants, drug and human traffickers.
- ❖ Intensify training of men and women law enforcement agents to deal with criminals, drug and human trafficking.
- ❖ Vending places need to be localised in order to control the internal movement of criminal immigrants including refugees.
- ❖ Public awareness campaign targeting men, women, boys and girls on their roles and responsibility in ensuring armed conflict free Malawian Society. and
- ❖ Some business ventures such as brothels and casinos need to be controlled in order to protect women, girls and boys.
- ❖ Provision of passports to foreigners who marry Malawian women need to be strictly controlled.
- ❖ Gender sensitive immigration and citizenship laws are required in order to protect men and women from conflict situations.

### **F Women and economy**

#### **(a) Constraints**

A number of constraints exist in Malawi's efforts to attain economic growth through participation of women. Some of them are as follows:

##### **i. Fewer women in decision making positions :**

Even though women and men may have similar educational qualification, men are promoted to senior positions faster while women who equally qualify are not. As a result, men fill 87% of the management positions compared to 13% by women. In terms of numbers, fewer women are

highly qualified. This means women's voices are not heard in the high administrative circles of the Malawian Society, hence their needs are not taken into consideration.

**ii. Limited training opportunities for women:**

Because of their educational levels, women have limited access to training which can improve their career progression.

**iii. Limited credit facilities:**

Despite Government's efforts to link the poor especially women to commercial banks and other microfinance institutions, some financial institutions procedures are still discriminatory as women are considered credit risks especially due to the nature of their businesses, their capital base and minute loans applied for.

**iv. Violence at the work place:**

Violence at the work place, which takes the form of sexual, social, psychological and low salaries, which are not proportional to the work done, is still very rampant despite the launch of the National Strategy on Gender Based Violence. This is more pronounced in almost all sectors such as the public, private, domestic and NGO/Civil Sectors.

**v. Unfriendly Workplaces**

- There are no appropriate facilities at the workplace such as the day care centres for breast-feeding mothers. This therefore, discourages women to continue working if they are in reproductive age.
- Lack of women and men's health facilities at the workplace also make women's working environment hostile in relation to reproductive roles.
- Inadequacy of statistics on numbers and conditions of women mainly employed in the public and private sector limit prospects for determining the necessary support structure and prompting timely intervention.
- Lack of defined women friendly marketing structure.

**vi. Poor product quality - Lack of production skills especially in quality control.**

Most of women's products are of poor quality thereby limiting profits and products' market value.

**vii. Poor communication network**

There is poor communication network between the production point to the market that is marked by limited haulage, processing, storage and handling services. This leads to limited marketing opportunities for women products. Poor road network and low capacity for utilisation of communication technology like E-mail, internet and telephones are some of the contributing factors to this.

**(b) Challenges**

- ◆ The biggest challenge Malawi faces is to develop appropriate mechanisms for including women's remunerated labour force into the GDP.
- ◆ Change of people's perception and mind set about women's capability in all sectors of the economy remains a big challenge.

- ◆ Meeting the SADC declaration of at least 30% women in positions of decision making at all levels of the Malawian Economy by 2005 remains a challenge.
- ◆ Having adequate credit facilities to meet the demand of 70% women and 30% men who wish to be engaged in off farm economy remains a mammoth task.
- ◆ Installing a culture of repayment for credit to release credit fund for other to benefit..
- ◆ Creating a conducive, environment for women in decision making position to fit, perform and be retained in the employment sector.
- ◆ Promotion of the girl child's mind set to value education from a tender age.

### **(c) Way forward**

- ❖ Put in place mechanisms within the country's legal framework that will ensure that the at least women take 30% of all decision-making positions, provision of adequate support mechanisms for women to participate and control the employment sector.
- ❖ Increases the credit funds deposited with commercial banks to cover more beneficiaries and wean older groups to enable them borrow directly from commercial banks.
- ❖ Put in place a marketing structure or outlet with built in quality control mechanisms to enable products by the rural women to penetrate the international market in an organised manner.
- ❖ The developed public service employment gender mainstreaming guidelines should be distributed under not only to public sector institutions but also to private and NGO sector.
- ❖ There is need to educate more girls.
- ❖ Devise methodologies for including women's labour in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- ❖ Provide technology to ease women's time and labour for productive work.
- ❖ There is need to improve the communication network in order to enable the poor rural women to access markets for their products and raw materials and to encourage more mini-trade fairs that expose women to market opportunities.
- ❖ Force work places to have day care centres for breast feeding mothers.
- ❖ There is need to intensify gender mainstreaming work in the public sector.
- ❖ There is need to intensify mechanisms to combat GBV at the work place

## **G women in power and decision making positions**

### **(a) Challenges**

Despite the opportunities discussed in section G (b) mentioned above, the efforts to increase the number of women in politics and decision-making positions are undermined by several factors such as:

- ◆ The Malawi Constitution does not provide a quota system as an affirmative action to increasing women's participation.
- ◆ Sabbatical leave in is not provided for women who wish to join politics in Malawi. This limits employed women's desire to join politics.
- ◆ Operational legislation to the Constitutional provision on women's rights as enshrined in Chapter 4, the Bill of Rights is not enacted. Consequently, cultural values that put women as second-class citizens take the upper hand.
- ◆ Changing mind-set of the populace that women can effectively and efficiently handle public life just like men is a huge task to undertake.

## **(b) Way Forward**

- ❖ Malawi government has come up with Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines in the Public Service. These guidelines have gender sensitive provisions for recruitments, promotional, and capacity building to ensure equal representation for both men and women in positions of power.
- ❖ In addition, the government has also developed Gender Planning and Budgeting Guidelines to ensure that resources allocation to development work has engendered outcomes in order to attain equitable and sustainable development.
- ❖ Gender Auditing tools have also been developed in order to facilitate the monitoring of gender mainstreaming in all development undertakings. The challenge is to disseminate these widely and to ensure that institutions use them in monitoring their activities.
- ❖ Malawi will continue to implement the national, regional and international instruments that promote women's rights and gender equality through lobbying and advocacy for more women in decision-making positions.
- ❖ Malawi will also continue to provide support mechanism for women in decision making positions through management, assertiveness and confidence building training.

## **I Human rights of women**

### **(a) Constraints**

- Inadequate resources allocated to the legal education and law reform activities.
- Attitude of Judges and Magistrates who carry with them to the court room their socialisation and traditional practices and attitudes that results in prejudice and concluding many of the cases negatively.
- Lack of knowledge in one's own human rights for the majority of women and inability of women to demand their rights for fear of reprisal in a system where women's rights have not been fully comprehended.
- Reliance on donor funds for most legal reform and education issues has lead to lack of a comprehensive strategy to educate the gender.
- Fragmented public awareness work on human, women and children's rights due to absence of a Nation Civic Education Campaign coordinated by the identified institutions.

### **(b) Challenges**

- ◆ Operationalising and enforcing the provisions of the Constitution of Malawi on women's rights is not yet done due to cultural values that put women as second-class citizens.
- ◆ To Change peoples' mindset that women can effectively and efficiently handle public life just like men.
- ◆ Lack of Gender Equality Act to enforce these provisions
- ◆ Limited legal knowledge on human, women's, and child's rights; responsibilities, obligations and duties poses a challenge to the whole initiative mainly due to high illiteracy rates among women especially in the rural areas.
- ◆ Varying understanding of democracy and its relationship to human, women's and children's rights has led to the violation of women's rights. The challenge is to change the mindset of Malawians to view democracy as a tool for development and not a weapon for violating other people's rights.

- ◆ The existing traditional law has not been harmonised with the legal, international laws, and constitutional provisions.
- ◆ Inadequate monitoring mechanisms for women's rights initiatives.

### (c) Way Forward

- ❖ Malawi has made some strides in advancing women's rights through creation of a conducive environment for human rights institutions to operate.
- ❖ Advocacy and lobbying work need to be intensified on human, women and children's rights.
- ❖ A Gender Equality Act need to be produced and enacted accompanied with awareness creation on its provisions to women's, men and responsibilities for the duty bearer such as Judges, employers and decision makers among others.
- ❖ Multi-sectoral approach coupled with reader friendly materials and mainstreaming of the rights in all development programmes has to be deployed if women's rights have to be respected.
- ❖ Mainstream Human Resource issues in the curriculum of education institutions starting with early childhood development programmes.
- ❖ There is need to harmonise traditional, international that protect women and children and national law
- ❖ Develop information management systems that would facilitate monitoring and evaluation of women's, children's and human rights.

## J Women and the media

### (a) Constraints

- Gender insensitive language and sexist advertisement still exist in the media.
- Folk roles and songs portray women as subordinates and of a weaker sex.
- Adverts and Drama portray women as informal sexual objectives, economically dependency.
- High illiteracy rate among women as it stands at 59% contributes to problems in interpreting of billboards and other visual aids; and access to print information.
- In appropriate media technology for women such as the video camera are too heavy for women, and expensive to purchase.
- Most women have limited interest in the media possibly because of low literacy levels and lack of time to partake media proceedings such as listening to news, video watching and reading the newspapers.
- Lower professional positions held by women in the media. Refer to table 21 below:

Table 21: *Percentage of women in lower level positions in the media profession*

TV Presenters (%)		TV Reporters (%)		Radio Reporters (%)		Print Reporters (%)	
Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
42	58	27	73	28	72	8	92

**Source:** Gender and Media baseline study for Malawi 2002

- Women Journalists have difficulties in accessing stories. This is because of in-favourable and in-conducive working environment for women Journalists. The 2002 gender and media

baseline study revealed that there are 12% women compared to 88% men as news sources in the media.

- Lack of gender sensitivity in the media resulting in failure to eliminate gender based stereotyping found in public, private and national media organization.
- Due to cultural values, politically women are on the negative side in the media. Majority of Malawians would like to hear male voices when it comes to political issues. This is also manifested in political interviews as most of the people interviewed are men.
- Inadequate resources to promote women in the media. These resources include transport, technical hick ups and finances.

**(b) Challenges:**

- To portray women positively in the media
- More women to be featured as news sources and the challenge is to impart skills in women to be media friendly and avoid staying away from journalists.
- Instil a positive attitude in people's mind to appreciate gender equality in the media.
- Remove the negative and destructive language attached to desirable women such as "Hopeless and Helpless".
- Provide appropriate and user friendly technology for women journalist.
- Poor reading culture among Malawians generally a function of low literacy levels.

**(c) Way forward**

- ❖ Encourage women to join the media through role modelling and monitoring progress.
- ❖ Lobbying the government to support women in the media through further training.
- ❖ Introduce conducive and friendly working conditions for women in the media in order to increase the number of women in the media profession.
- ❖ Introduce a literacy programme using mass media such as community solar TV and radio which, has 80% listening audience by 2003 compared to 55% in 1995.
- ❖ Portray women positively and use profiling as a motivation tool for rural women.

***K Women and environment***

**(a) Constraints:**

- Dependency on the use of fuel wood. This is due to the limited electricity distribution and high costs of electric power. This has forced 96% of Malawians to depend on 93% fuel wood mostly at household level. Women have to walk 5 km to collect firewood due to deforestation and half to 2km to fetch water compared to 2.5 to 7km and one to 5km respectively in 1995.
- The nutritional status of the family is also affected because households can not prepare nutritious and affordable foods such as beans due to limited energy supply that result in reduced meal frequency.
- Wood energy requirements have resulted in cutting down of fruit trees and limiting the availability of additional sources of nutrients.
- Deforestation has left the land unprotected, resulting in high soil erosion, floods and disturbance of the rainfall pattern causing droughts.

- Degradation contributes significantly to household food insecurity as a result of poor rainfall, soil fertility and floods that affect the most resource poor households 70% of whom are women.
- The rehabilitation of the environment is very limited; enforcement and follow-up mechanisms are poor.

#### **(b) Challenges**

- Reinforcement of laws and legislation governing Natural resources utilisation and penalties remain a nightmare. The challenge is to enforce these laws.
- Use of alternative and new and renewable sources of energy remain a dream
- Natural disasters and global warming deplete the Natural resource and the environment, making it unusable.
- Limited technologies used for environmental rehabilitated.
- Unsustainable Natural Resource and Environment Management techniques.

#### **(c) Way forward**

- ❖ Sensitisation and awareness campaigns to communities to rehabilitate the environment such as National tree planting week, use of fire brigades, use of other plant residues other than firewood and solar energy for cooking should be encouraged, intensified and followed up. This can best be done at local government level through the formulation and enforcement of by laws.
- ❖ Women's participation in the management of the Natural Resources and the Environment, Such as income Generating Activities from Natural Resources like bee keeping, making of fire brigades, fish farming, guinea fowl rearing should be intensified.
- ❖ Intensification of National Adaptation Programme for Action so that women learn how to adapt to natural disasters and find coping mechanisms for them to survive.
- ❖ 50% women representation in community based committees for natural resource management target should be maintained and put in place support mechanisms for officer.
- ❖ Continuously integrate women's indigenous perspectives and knowledge, on an equal basis with men, in decision-making regarding sustainable resource management and the development of policies and programmes for sustainable development.
- ❖ Implement the National Gender Programme one of whose thematic area is Environmental and Natural Resource Management.
- ❖ Strengthen the civil society organizations for purposes of advocacy on use and maintenance of the environment and Natural Resources.
- ❖ Enhance the support and monitoring of the already existing projects and programmes to ensure that an enabling environment is created where women, men, girls and boys are empowered to actively participate in and benefit from the activities of Natural Resource and Environment Management.